25

JUNE 1988

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OF WORLD AFFAIRS

NEW TIMES

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NEW TIMES

No. 25, June 1988

Founded 1943

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AFTER THE SUMMIT

What is the U.S. President's opinion of the changes in the Soviet Union?

What impedes the drafting of a START agreement?

What is the essence of the Soviet proposals to consolidate peace and international security?

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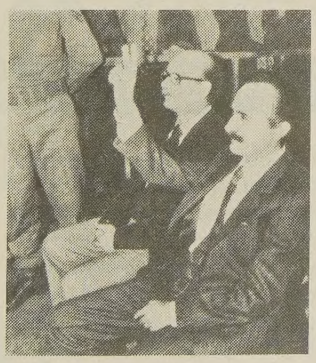

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Our address: Pushkin Square, Moscow, GSP, 103782, U.S.S.R. Telephones: 229-88-72, 209-07-67

Published in Russian, English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Polish, Czech and Greek ● Telex: 411164a NEWT SU, 411164b NEWT SU, 411164c NEWT SU ● Cables: New Times Pushkin Square Moscow ● Printed by the Moskovskaya Pravda press in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

OPINIONS

Bame NAPHTAL NIUH,
Accra, Ghana

■ I am writing this to congratulate the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and the President of the U.S.A. Ronald Reagan for the INF treaty recently signed. I should also like to thank them for the agreements they will sign in Moscow (perhaps by the time my letter arrives the summit will have already taken place). I am very sorry to say I believe the total elimination of nuclear weapons will not bring any peace to the world if what causes man to use the nuclear weapons is not settled. For me wars should have been eliminated before nuclear weapons. Without nuclear weapons wars can still continue and people will still die.

I am so much shaken when I read in the papers that Botha's apartheid regime sends schoolchildren to prison for no good reason. Those who love peace should do something to save the lives of victims of apartheid. I beg the superpowers to settle their disputes and I appeal to them to take action to build a strong peace and help do away with oppression and slavery in other countries.

James C. BILOTTA,
Enfield, Britain

■ Ever since President Reagan took up his duties in 1981 his administration "has taken under its protection the poor and defenceless Americans, the schoolchildren and their parents." But never since the hungry thirties and the great depression have more men, women and children been without homes. Since 1981, while preparations for war were on the increase, the figures for the Department of Housing and Urban Development showed a 78 per cent decrease. With these cuts in house building went a commensurate increase in human beings living in allayways in cardboard boxes, innumerable public spaces like parks, abandoned buildings, warm air vents in public streets. National estimates range from a lowly figure of 250,000 to two million.

The recent Mayors' Conference reported the composition of the nation's homeless as follows: 56 per cent single men, 15 per cent single women, 28 per cent families with children, 1 per cent other categories.

The administration would not even think of a programme to provide daycare for the homeless. Reagan is even yipping of equal rights, but he'd never consider the right to work and to a home as a human right.

So I always find it unpleasant when I hear that the U.S. President has again brought up the matter of human rights in the U.S.S.R. It reminds me of the saying: he who is sinless...

In my own country, there are homeless too. Various programmes are drawn up to aid them. But, alas, they are little effective.

TOWARDS THE COMING PARTY CONFERENCE

Valentina RUDNEVA,
chemistry teacher at school No. 43, Gagarin District, Moscow.
Delegate to the 19th All-Union CPSU conference

■ Regrettably, the elections of delegates to the conference were almost over before discussions of the Motions had begun in the work collectives, and as a result the indispensable ties between ideas and their bearers were often missing. Because of this, I should like to express my views as to how the elections were held, what lessons should evidently be drawn for the future, and how to set right things that can still be rectified.

That the election of candidates as delegates to the conference for the most part took place openly and democratically is a good thing. But at times a potentially dangerous situation was created, as a result of which people whose intellect, outlook and experience are essential to the success of the conference were left out in the cold. The apprehensions have, unfortunately, been confirmed. As a Muscovite I would list among such people, first and foremost, Academician Tatiana Zaslavskaya, the economist Gavriil Popov, the playwright and journalist Alexander Gelman, and in our Gagarin District, of course, Y. Zavelski, an honoured teacher of the Russian Federation, a man who fought courageously against routine in the years of stagnation, and introduced to school work the ideas of cooperation and fellowship. People like him, as well as the others mentioned (and the list could be continued), were the forerunners of perestroika. And their ideas contributed to the intellectual basis of the changes. And now – apparently as a result of organizational drawbacks in conducting the elections – these people have been deprived of the possibility of taking part in the conference.

To put it bluntly – I personally will miss their presence, their words, their ideas, their consistently revolutionary position. I believe that these Communists should be at the conference. Not as "wedding generals," but as people taking a decisive part in shaping the strategy and tactics of renewal. There is another way (such views have already been voiced in the press): despite the organizational formula – today that is not the most important thing – the CC CPSU could take the initiative and include amongst the delegates to the conference those for whom perestroika is their life's work, those whom it needs so vitally.

A MATTER AT ISSUE

Boris MININ,
Moscow, U.S.S.R.

■ As of last January there has existed an International Fund for the Survival and Development of Mankind. Its main goal is to unite all efforts aimed at resolving global problems affecting all of mankind: disarmament, ecology, culture, mutual understanding and cooperation between the public in different countries.

Mankind's talents and creative potential should be used exclusively in the interests of society, and not for the arms race. That idea was put forward by the Vice-President of the Fund Jerome Wiesner (U.S.A.) during a meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev. To this the Soviet leader replied that "by uniting great intellectual forces around itself, the Fund could identify the imperative needs of the world today and turn them over to politicians in the form of scientifically-founded conclusions."

The time has now come to put this into practice. But how? What should the by no means small sums of money donated to the Fund by many people throughout the world be used for? What should be done really to ensure that the organization promotes the survival of mankind in the face of nuclear catastrophe, various epidemics, psychological stresses? How can new progressive ideas and clever theories be made available to all of mankind? As I see it, the

GLASNOST

answer is through the Fund setting up its own publishing house on the basis of a free exchange of information. Every book or booklet would be published at the author's own expense. But in risking his money, the author would be reducing the risk of the dissemination in society of literature that is neither original nor unuseful. If an author's book proves a success, his money will naturally be returned to him, and perhaps more than he risked.

I should like readers to write about how they visualize the strategic directions along which such an organization should operate.

CARRYING ON THE DISCUSSION

Ivan BELCHEVSKY,
Verkhnedneprovsk, U.S.S.R.

■ Insofar as the Stalin cult is concerned, I share the view of those who believe that everything should be said and explained honestly and truthfully. But how that should be done so that people's minds be set at ease, I do not know. All I know is that it must be done. What worries me is something else: at present no less, and probably even more, is being written about the period of stagnation. It horrifies me just to think what might have happened if the stagnation had continued for several years more....

Another thing also worries me: I read the papers, watch TV and see that everybody is in favour of the efforts to combat drunkenness, corruption, petty pilfering, bribery, bureaucracy. But in everyday life around me I often hear a different view: "Brezhnev lived well and allowed us to do the same." And believe me, I have heard that from more than one person. These words make me shudder, as does the thought that there are still such people among our leaders. How much sorrow, shame and grief the period of stagnation brought us! And not only in domestic affairs, but in foreign affairs as well. Each new day brings us more information about our past – and more often than not negative information. Of course the truth is necessary. But frankly, I'm very tired. At first I was delighted – in the past there could be no question of such frankness in publications; then I started to despair – what had I lived my life for? All my life I sought to do good, for almost 30 years I served in the Soviet Army. I believe the Party today too.

I consider myself to blame too for what happened, although probably I'm not guilty of anything; while those who are really responsible for stagnation regret nothing. And that is the most frightening thing. That is why, after much wavering, I have come to the conclusion: the truth has to be told, no matter how bitter.

Jose Poveda CRUZ,
Cuba

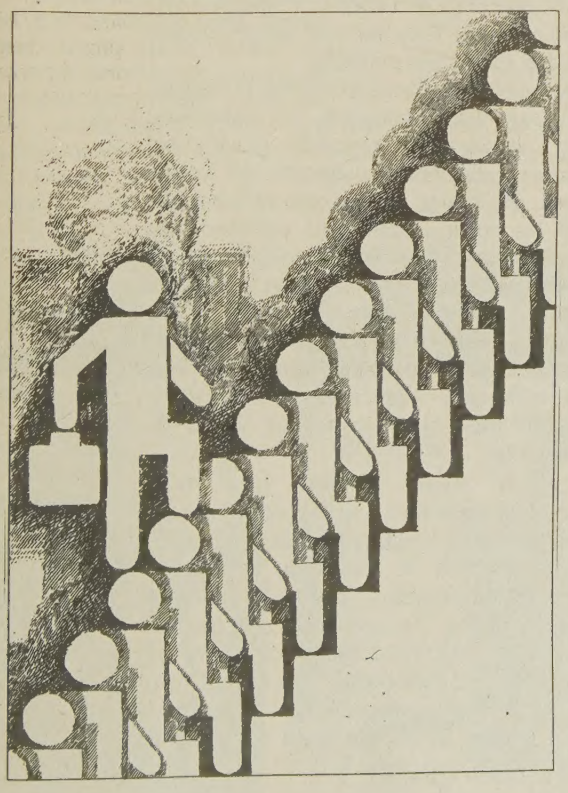
■ I am firmly convinced that there should be no blank spots in history, nor any arbitrary interpretation of it. When it comes to such a contradictory leader as Stalin, it is particularly important to give a sober and unbiased assessment. In my country very little was written about him until recently. Many believed that it was he who led the Soviet Union to victory over fascism and that only he could have accomplished such a feat. We have to delve deeper into history, since that alone can ensure the advance of socialism. We have to look back to see what mistakes were made and understand how they can be set right. To remain silent is an unforgivable moral weakness.

The writer Anatoly Rybakov in his novel "Children of the Arbat" describes many interesting facets of Stalin's character. From the excerpts I read, I remember one – the part where Stalin says that he doesn't like young people wearing imported raincoats. And what about our days? Haven't there been leaders who judged a young man by his external appearance, not by his abilities or his attitude to his work and his country? I think that if things like that had been spoken about in the past, many of the excesses and dogmatic approaches could have been avoided.

I am certain that the knowledge of history helps us to live today. And that does not apply only to the Stalin period. All the above could be applied to Nikita Khrushchev, the first Soviet leader to offer us a helping hand in our hour of need.

Perestroika must not be confined to current economic, political and social problems (although there are plenty of them). Signor Sarzi-Sartori should understand that such an approach is too limited. To look back on the past and analyze its various aspects from the position of today provides fresh experience, useful both for the U.S.S.R. and world socialism. After all, none of us Communists were indifferent to the posthumous rehabilitation of Bukharin. On the contrary, it gives us faith in the correctness of the revolutionary process that is now taking place in the Soviet Union.

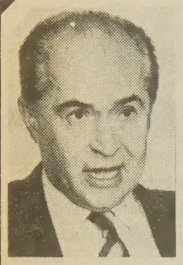
ARTIST'S COMMENT



Drawing by Alexander Kukushkin

PRIVATE OPINION

HIGHLIGHT OF THE WEEK



GEORGIOS VASILIOU, President of the Republic of Cyprus

The latest Soviet initiatives in the field of disarmament, advanced by Eduard Shevardnadze from the rostrum of the U.N. General Assembly, are extremely constructive. The concept of disarmament, based as it is on the idea of the integrity of the modern world, is close and accessible to me. Indeed, it is impossible to resolve global problems while overlooking regional ones. A settlement of the Cyprus issue would also help strengthen international security.

Many Soviet initiatives fully meet the interests of our people. For instance, the Soviet proposal for a reduction in conventional armaments accords with our proposal for the demilitarization of Cyprus. We support the idea of forming a U.N. naval force and agree with the role the U.N. is supposed to play in world affairs. We sincerely welcome the proposal to remove foreign troops and military bases from other countries by the year 2000. It is directly linked with the question of consolidating peace and security in the Mediterranean.

The idea of establishing an international Disarmament for Development Foundation is important, of course, but it will not be easy to put into effect. We propose creating national foundations of this kind as an intermediate step.

I think the participants in the U.N. session should declare to the world that we are entering a new era, an era of peaceful coexistence, and peaceful competition between the different social systems. Let us stop competing in the manufacture of ever more sophisticated weapons.

Cardinal JOHANNES WILLEBRANDS, President of the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity

The celebration of the Millennium of Christianity in Russia has impressed me and exceeded all my expectations. It is without doubt one of the most important religious events in the life of the Russian people and mankind as a whole. The great holiday of the Orthodox Christian Church has brought together not only believers but also people far removed from religion. It has vividly demonstrated the powerful roots on which the history and culture of your state have been evolving and strengthening for centuries.

The fact that we representatives of different countries and religions have been able to come to Moscow and other cities and observe the jubilee should be attributed to perestroika, which has had a beneficial effect on church-state relations.

All of us are today facing great common tasks: the struggle for world peace and happiness, and the shaping of a virtuous and highly moral individual. The individual must develop not only mentally and physically but, most importantly, morally. It is here that the Church should make its contribution.

ROY MEDVEDEV, historian

At its plenum on June 13, the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R., repealed the sentences passed at the show trials of 1935-37 and rehabilitated several dozen victims of the Stalin repressions, including such noted political, government and party leaders as Grigori Zinoviev and Lev Kamenev, close associates of Lenin, Georgi Pyatakov, E. Evdokimov, Ivan Smirnov and Karl Radek.

One can have different opinions of these people. It cannot be denied, however, that all of them played an active part in the establishment of the Bolshevik Party, the preparation of the revolution, in the civil war, the building of the new state and in its economic and cultural progress. They had their successes and failures, merits and demerits.

Not all of their deeds are worthy of respect. But they were politicians, not saboteurs; party workers, not terrorists; government leaders, scholars and publicists, not foreign spies. Stalin was not content with the fact that his political opponents admitted their mistakes, accepted his dictatorship and, together with many others, began to eulogize him. He declared them "enemies of the people," terrorists and saboteurs and charged them with the assassination of Kirov and with many other crimes and shortcomings for most of which he was himself responsible.

Several more "blanks" have been filled in in our history, and this process is continuing. But rehabilitation is not an occasion for panegyrics. It allows us to take an honest and objective view of the complex events during the revolution and the civil war, in the 1920s and 1930s, and of political disputes and tendencies. We do not need a false history, consisting of victories and crimes alone. We need a history as it really was.

Always sharing in their country's destiny

The Russian Orthodox Church celebrates the Millennium of Christianity in Russia

The second millennium of Russian Christianity has already begun. "The time has come for reflection and glorification," says Sergei Averintsev, a student of our cultural heritage. This aptly describes the contemporary urge to attain the universal human values enshrined in the Christian creed.

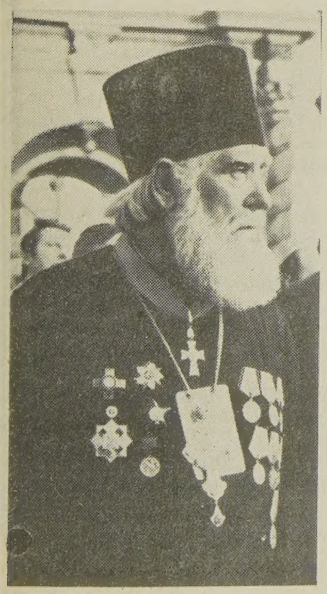
Wat does the conversion to Christianity that occurred ten centuries ago mean for us today? This was discussed at three international conferences of clerical scholars, each a milestone on the way to the celebrations of the Millennium. The conferences debated aspects of the history, theology, legend, liturgy and art of the Russian Orthodox Church. What was especially noteworthy about them was that not only clerical theologians, historians and essayists were actively involved, but also Leningrad and Moscow universities teachers and staff members of various government museums, research institutes of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, academic libraries and schools of music. The subjects analyzed in exhaustive detail included such matters stemming from Russia's conversion to Christianity as the rise of Russian statehood, the emergence of a national consciousness, the propagation of literacy and the birth of an original literature and a national school of art.

The hundreds of papers and communications presented traced the thousand years of arduous development traversed by Russian Orthodoxy. When in the past religious faith was designated as "obscurantism," the fact that religion represents the discipline of and need for moral catharsis and the constant urge for self-perfection, was forgotten. In the view of the devout, this leads to the ideal, which is still more splendid by virtue of its unattainability, but to which one must dedicate one's every-day concerns and behaviour. This is the road to love and hence to peace.

For many years we in the Soviet Union had, besides areas where criticism was prohibited, likewise areas that seemed to have been specially instituted and marked out for it. This applied particularly to religion, which in those times existed, it was believed, merely to be fought against, exposed and ridiculed.

Subsequently the chapter of the wholesale denigration of the Church receded into oblivion to give way to a period when representatives of the clergy appeared in the news media, albeit exclusively as participants in the campaign for peace, and against nuclear war. (Though the urge for peace is an inalienable and crucial aspect of the activity of the Russian Orthodox Church, its activity is by no means confined to it.) Today the clergy can air their views on diverse aspects of Church life, history and art before vast numbers of readers, listeners and TV and cinema audiences.

The Church is acquiring a place of honour in society and public opinion. Its present status is both an illustration and a result of perestroika. New parishes are being established. Some sixty new congregations appeared in the first five months of this year alone. More churches are being built. Parents no longer have to present internal passports when seeking to have their children baptized. Several monasteries and convents as well as various buildings have been returned to the Church. Divine service is already being conducted in the Far Caves and two churches of the Kiev-Pechery Monastery. Holy relics preserved in the Kremlin museums in Moscow have been handed over to the Church. Theolgoical seminaries and academies in Moscow, Leningrad and Odessa are admitting



more students. The new religious legislation that is now being drafted will furnish fuller and more exact guarantees of the rights of believers. The foundation stone of a church to be built in honour of the Millennium was laid in Moscow in the neighbourhood of Tsaritsino, on June 13.

The fact that hundreds of guests from nearly a hundred countries took part in the millennial celebrations is evidence of the recognition accorded to the outstanding role of the Russian Orthodox Church in the ecumenical movement. Dignitaries of many Orthodox and non-Orthodox churches as well as of other creeds came to Moscow. There was an especially impressive delegation from the Vatican. As the Secretary of State, Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, remarked, at no previous time had so many Catholic prelates arrived simultaneously in Russia. For the first time in Soviet history, the CPSU General Secretary received the Vatican head of government, who handed Mikhail Gorbachev a letter from the supreme pontiff.

"In the eyes of the foreign visitors," Henri Lopes, deputy Director General of UNESCO, observed, "the Millennial celebrations were symbolic of the changes currently taking place in the Soviet Union, and demonstrated the observance of human rights and freedom of conscience."

True enough, both the mood and atmosphere of the celebrations, which could have been a matter purely ecclesiastical, but which evolved into a nationwide festival of Russian culture and statehood, were consonant with the whole picture of present-day Soviet life.

The celebrations, having ended in Moscow, have now moved to Kiev, Leningrad, Vladimir and other cities, towns and villages. Several months will pass before the end of the jubilee events now being held under the auspices of UNESCO in many countries. When the celebrations close, it will perhaps be appropriate to recall what His Eminence Aleksiy, Metropolitan of Leningrad and Novgorod, said only recently: "The celebrations of the Millennium of Christianity should be not just a jubilant anniversary but rather a stimulus, the beginning of a more intensive and thoughtful assimilation of our spiritual wealth, the start of a new, more eventful and still more responsible Christian life... For, after all, all true Christians are men and women with a highly developed sense of responsibility not only for their own personal destinies, but also for the destinies of their country and of humanity in general."

One already hears it said today that we are supposedly yielding to the Church and abandoning our atheist principles. That is the view only of people accustomed to past clichés and stereotypes. Nobody is seeking to encroach upon our materialistic world outlook or forcibly convert us. It is simply a question of rehabilitating the honour and dignity of millions of Soviet citizens, their constitutional rights, and the freedom of conscience as integral features of a law-abiding state.

SHENOUDA III, Coptic Pope and Patriarch (Egypt)

We have come together from all over the world to convey our respects to the Russian Church and its hierarchs, and to the whole Soviet people. We wish everyone of you and your country happiness and prosperity.

We see that relations between the Church and the state in your country are favourably developing. It has given us special pleasure to learn of the respect that General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev accorded the leaders of Russian Orthodoxy when receiving them in the Kremlin. We welcome what this outstanding leader of today has done for détente and hope that his future talks with the U.S. administration will ensure success to world peace.

MICHAEL PEERS, Archbishop of the Canadian Anglican Church

I was in the U.S.S.R. three years ago for the Easter holidays. At that time I visited many Russian Orthodox, Baptist and other Churches, and learned that the celebrations of the Millennium of Christianity in Russia could be fairly widespread and even perhaps be on a state level. However, at that time I was still unable to imagine that such familiar notions for us today as perestroika and glasnost could do so much in that direction, especially when compared with what went before.

I had the good fortune to be in Kiev when the announcement came that some of the caves and buildings of the Kiev-Pechery Monastery were to be handed over to the Church. What struck me was that this evoked delight not only from church congregations, but even from the ordinary people with whom I chatted in the streets in the Ukrainian capital and on board the plane en route for Moscow.

I am happy to have witnessed noteworthy changes which hold out tremendous prospects for the entire Soviet people as well as for the Church.

Jos Bishop **GABRIEL GANAKA,** President of the Episcopal Churches of Africa and Madagascar

The present celebrations are a great historic highlight. We share the delight of all your people that this jubilee has occurred at a time when the voice of détente is heard more and more loudly throughout the world.

It behoves the Church, Christianity and all other faiths to march in the van of the movement for peace and universal happiness. For that is our duty and our great mission.

Bishop **ANDREAS AARFLOT** (Norway)

The jubilee celebrations of the Millennium of Christianity in Russia can be viewed from different angles. However, it is absolutely plain that it represents a major highlight for the Russian Orthodox Church, bringing it within the purview of the public at large. At the same time, the current celebrations have afforded a marvellous opportunity for representatives of the Churches of the world and all faiths to come together. In my view Christians must meet one another as often as possible as this makes for mutual understanding and greater confidence.

This is not the first year that our Norwegian Lutheran Church has collaborated with the Russian Orthodox Church. Some five years ago I came to Moscow with a delegation of religious dignitaries. Last year we received a return visit. We have had plentiful discussions. Today we associate great hopes with the policy of democratization and glasnost, with perestroika. The atmosphere in your country is more open and cordial, and I hope this will all be conducive to the activities of the Church as well.

I think the Church should contribute and is contributing signally to the preservation of peace. My own country affords an apposite instance. We are striving for greater security and disarmament, nuclear disarmament included. This movement is based on Christian teaching. We must tell the devout not only about holiness in heaven, but also about goodness here on Earth.

Compiled by Olga Bai, Alexei Bukalov, Vladimir Galin and Anatoly Kovrigin.

Photos by V. Galin

Foreign policy concepts updated

Vadim Zagladin

Do we have to criticize the government's foreign policy?

The discussion of the Central Committee's Motions for the 19th National Party Conference is focussed mainly on provisions relating to perestroika, the development of Soviet society. This is understandable. However, inadequate attention is given, in my opinion, to the tenth motion, which is concerned with foreign policy.

Occasionally, however, the tenth motion has come up for discussion, and questions like the following have even been asked "Is it necessary to make a critical analysis of our past foreign policy? Aren't we creating the impression that everything was bad in the past and that all is well now? Is that true?"

Of course, in foreign policy as well as in other spheres, criticism should be pointed, balanced and substantiated. Premature, superficial and insufficiently grounded judgements are unacceptable, especially inasmuch as foreign policy concerns our relations with other countries, and any critical remarks are likely to influence them in one way or another.

Within certain limits, criticism is necessary in foreign policy too. It is no longer taboo. Unless the lessons of the past are thoroughly examined, it is difficult to plan foreign policy properly.

In doing so, we should take account of the general conclusions that have already been drawn at the highest party level and which, I am sure, are entirely correct. For instance, in his report, "October and Perestroika. The Revolution Continues," Mikhail Gorbachev criticized some aspects of our foreign policy. "It is true that some things could have been tackled better and that we could have been more efficient," he said. "Nevertheless, we can say on this memorable occasion that the overall thrust of our policy has remained true to the basic course worked out and charted by Lenin – consonant with the very nature of socialism, and its principled commitment to peace."

I think this should be the starting point in our approach to a critical analysis of our foreign policy. It is necessary to see both its main directions and results, and the cases where we made wrong or inadequate moves. We should also ask ourselves again and again: "Have we always responded correctly to the actions of the other side? Has it not happened that our counteractions merely furthered our opponents' unseemly goals?"

The Motions say in generalized form that we have had our share of failures. For instance, we missed new opportunities to reduce tensions and enhance understanding among nations. A concrete example is also given in the Motions: "In our bid for military-strategic parity, we sometimes failed to use the opportunities available to attain security for our people by political means and, as a result, allowed ourselves to be lured into an arms race, which could not but affect our country's social and economic progress and its position on the international scene."

I have already said above that a critical analysis of foreign policy should be well-balanced. This means first of all that, considering one or other foreign policy move, we should take proper account of the situation, the concrete state of affairs in our country and the world obtaining at the time. For every decision is taken in a concrete, not an abstract, situation. Furthermore, it is also necessary to remember what concepts prevailed at the time when one or another decision was adopted.

It will be recalled that only recently we held ideas largely different from those we advocate today. For instance, while rejecting nuclear war, we nevertheless believed it would be possible to achieve victory in it. This evidently explains why we devoted more attention to military-strategic than political factors of security. This also predetermined some of the decisions adopted at the time.

Today, turning to the past, we are trying to draw the lessons needed for our movement forward, towards a lasting and stable peace. It is not in any sense fortuitous that a critical analysis has led the party leadership to the following conclusion: what is needed is not a tactical amendment but a fundamental renewal of our foreign policy concept; it is necessary to update this concept.

The basic idea of renewal stems from the integrity of the modern world, controversial as it is, and the priority of interests common to all mankind, especially that of survival. Proceeding from this idea, the Soviet Union has put forward initiatives and proposals aimed at creating a nuclear-free world existing in an atmosphere of comprehensive security.

What is the practical result of this policy? "The direct threat of a war involving the major powers has diminished," the Motions say. "The international position of the Soviet Union has markedly improved, and through enhanced confidence in our country rather than an increase in might." This result deserves respect and support. It shows that a critical and constructive approach has proved its value, and should therefore be developed further. That is the aim of the forthcoming conference.

What honour and good sense prescribe

Alexander Pumpyansky

A journalist covering a historic event is always left with a large spillover of details and sidelights. Here is an episode I jotted down in my notebook after the previous, Washington, summit.

The newspaper The Washington Post had carried a series of articles about Richard Perle, calling him a "quintessential" hard-liner in East-West relations. Mr Perle's hard-line views, the paper said, were based on the call by Winston Churchill, whom all the right swear by, "never to give in." The story drew letters from readers, one of whom wrote:

"I enjoyed the series. I could not help wondering, however, how much of Mr Perle's hard-line views were based on the error in the Winston Churchill quotation. I think it is important that Mr Perle and Post readers be apprised of the complete quotation that Mr Churchill gave at his famous speech at Harrow School:

Never give in,
Never give in,
Never, never, never, never,
– in nothing great or small,
large or petty –
Never give in except
to convictions
of honour and good sense.

"I may be wrong but I believe that even Mr Perle would give in to those two omitted items – honour and good sense."

Let us now discuss change and consistency, see where the one begins and the other ends, and what role honour and good sense have to play in politics.

President Reagan's visit to Moscow can be described as a History of Great Changes and of how hard they come. The President arrived in a changing country. For our part, we also saw a new Ronald Reagan – a realistic statesman rather than an anti-Communist warrior. He obviously sought to make an impression on us by constantly demonstrating his respect for humanitarian values and for the ordinary people.

It would be interesting to take a look at ourselves through the eyes of an unusual viewer like Ronald Reagan. What did he see in the U.S.S.R.? What were his impressions of our men and women, of our life, of his interlocutor? Does he view things any differently now from a distance and as the visit recedes into the past? The President keeps mentioning it in his pronouncements, and the Reagan quotations on the Moscow summit could well be published in red-cover booklet form.

The President praises the changes under way in the U.S.S.R. How are the Americans and ourselves to take this?

The question is not as simple as it sounds. Towards the end of the summit even The Washington Post ran out of patience. "It was exciting to have President Reagan in Moscow, but truth be told, it will be good to have him out," the paper wrote editorially, and added that the President was not so much an attentive observer as an uncritical advocate of the Soviet reform.

The paper has a liberal reputation, so what can you expect of the conservatives? Richard Viguerie, a very noisy right-wing politician, even referred to the President as Russia's No. 1 sympathizer.

The American right get into a temper, but something has indeed happened, and this something is not to their liking. The President has destroyed, in passing, the "empire of evil" myth, a product of his own painstaking efforts throughout his seven years in office. After all the "empire of evil" is not merely an oath which escaped the President's lips in the heat of the moment. Any American knows this image from a modern Hollywood TV fairy tale – a nightmarish aggressive tyranny, a habitat of beastlike humanoids. Now this image has collapsed. Why?

One could say, of course, that once in Moscow the President did not spot a single Soviet citizen sporting a tail, fangs or horns, and this touched him to the quick. Actually, this was caused by another and more fundamental change. No sooner had the land of Glasnost and Perestroika changed the Americans' feelings towards the Soviet Union from fear to curiosity and sympathy, than the right's pet scenario of the interrelationships between the two superpowers – American "good guys" fighting the "em-

President Reagan speaks

"Quite possibly, we are beginning to take down the barriers of the postwar era; quite possibly, we are entering a new era in history, a time of lasting change in the Soviet Union...

"In all aspects of Soviet life, the talk is of progress towards democratic reform. In the economy, in political institutions, in religious, social, and artistic life. It is called glasnost. It is perestroika. Mr Gorbachev and I discussed his upcoming party conference where many of these reforms will be debated and, perhaps, adopted. Such things as official accountability, limitations on length of service in office, an independent judiciary, revisions of the criminal law, and lowering taxes on cooperatives. In short, giving individuals more freedom to run their own affairs, to control their own destinies...

"To those of us familiar with the postwar era, all of this is cause for shaking the head in wonder. Imagine, the President of the United States and the General Secretary of the Soviet Union walking together in Red Square talking about the growing personal friendship and meeting, together, average citizens, realizing how much our people have in common...

"My personal impression of Mr Gorbachev is that he is a serious man seeking serious reform."

(From address by the President to the Royal Institute of International Affairs)

pire of evil" – fell flat. For all their simpleheartedness and for all their love for Hollywood's special effects the Americans stopped buying this crudity. The right-wing dogmatists and orthodoxes would not put up with that, but the President is too experienced to keep running a once-successful show which has lost its audience.

The Americans aside, how are we ourselves supposed to react to praises from someone who has heaped so much abuse on us? Is this cause for joy or sorrow?

Generally speaking, the best thing to do would be to follow Pushkin's advice and remain "indifferent alike to praise or blame." But whatever we do, there is certainly no reason why we should feel scared. Both vain pride in being praised by others, and the view that if your enemy praises you, you must have put a foot wrong somewhere are signs of dependence. Now we have sense enough to judge ourselves on our own merit, not by others' opinion of us. Calling stagnation stagnation, and not proclaiming bureaucratic arbitrary rule a triumph of democracy is also a matter of both honour and good sense.

I am not saying that the President's chief preoccupation while in Moscow was trying to make a good impression on his hosts. The hosts weren't quite happy about quite a lot of what the President did.

I was in the Spaso House when the President had a get-together with "refuseniks" there, and had mixed feelings about that event. I felt ashamed of that meeting having taken place at all, of even a small group of people complaining of political injustice. But then I thought that three years ago there would have been more such guests than the entire American House, let alone its drawing room, could hold. Surprisingly, certain democratic changes in Soviet society were noted even at that meeting which had by no means been called to sing praise to the authorities. Nevertheless, as I recall the President's speeches at the Moscow University or at the Writers' Union, I say to myself that we must not allow fine words about freedom to be taken as a reproach at our social practice.

The American right shouldn't worry so much, really. The President did not change his views. His "perestroika" did not go as far as that. In London on his way home he brought up the subject of the "crusade" again.

They say you cannot step into the same river twice. But you can if the river is the Thames, if your host are the British Conservatives, and if you are out to reassure them. Speaking right there, in Parliament, six years before, Ronald Reagan had called for a world "crusade" for freedom and publicly promised to "leave Marxism-Leninism on the ash heap of history." Now, returning from the banks of the Moskva River, he announced that the "crusade" continued and even triumphantly so. He explained all the changes in Soviet-American relations and even the domestic changes in the U.S.S.R. by the fact that the West did not change, was firm and relied on strength.

To think how fanciful the President's rhetoric was! Just consider this: if there is no such thing as the "empire of evil," then what is the "crusade" against? The public revival of the "crusade" idea was an obvious verbal compensation for the forced burial of the tired old "empire." Even the very tribute to anti-Communist rhetoric was a compensation to the Western diehards for the visit to the East, a political apology of sorts.

It is an old dogma of the Conservatives that the two sacred notions – peace and freedom – are at odds. At the dawn of Reagan's presidency, his first Secretary of State Haig put this into the classic formula: "There are things more important than peace." The lesson was not lost on the President, who now proclaims two principles – the cause of peace and the cause of freedom for all mankind. Fine! These principles should materialize in a policy which rejects both the inevitability of war and perpetuity of totalitarian rule (incidentally, Washington is prepared to put up with totalitarian regimes provided they are pro-Western – but I'd rather not elaborate on this), in a realistic policy (sounds wonderful), in a policy which presupposes signing agreements not for the agreements' sake but for the sake of recognizing and eliminating our fundamental disagreements with our opponents. Stop! There is something wrong here, and this something threatens to turn the whole meaning of the phrase topsy-turvy.

Well, what are the agreements signed for?

Take the INF treaty, for instance. Has it been signed in order to recognize and remove fundamental differences between different socio-economic systems? Nothing of the kind. Its purpose is to achieve military relaxation, to get down to real disarmament, to detract from the threat of a holocaust.

One shouldn't set oneself obviously unrealistic goals. Even the treaty on a 50 per cent cut in strategic systems will not make socialism half-capitalism. If this is what the other side is banking on in earnest, we shall not have the teaty under the next pesident, either.

The existence of fundamental differences between the two social systems is no excuse for sabotaging nuclear disarmament. Peace and freedom, human rights and the rights of humankind are interconnected indeed – but not by the logic of confrontation. Attempts to tear them apart, to oppose one to the other, and renounce the idea of cooperation and thus to invent an excuse for giving up all thought of cooperation are dangerous both to peace and to freedom. On the contrary, honest and joint quests for peace will bring guarantees of freedom. This is what good sense and honour prompt. ■

President Reagan speaks

"Much is happening in the Soviet Union. We hope and pray that the signs of change continue there."

(From a speech at the Andrews Air Force Base upon arrival in the U.S.A.)

"Recently the Soviets have begun to show somewhat more respect for human rights...

"Accompanying these new political freedoms are a series of economic reforms that may begin to inject elements of free enterprise into the Soviet economy."

(From a radio address)

"...my strongest impression – an impression of change in the Soviet Union, an impression of new possibilities, of new hope.

"Differences remain, and it is still much too early to tell just where the changes in the Soviet Union itself will lead. But when a president of the United States is able to meet on Soviet soil with dissidents and refuseniks, able to exchange thoughts with cultural and intellectual leaders, able to discuss with Soviet young people the importance of individual freedoms, well, there is, as I said, a sense of new hope, a powerful hope.

"Yes, these are signs of change that are encouraging. They are promising."

(From a statement at a World Conference sponsored by the International Gas Union)

"Now under Mr Gorbachev the Soviets have a leader who appears to want to change things and who may actually be able to change things. Internally his promotion of perestroika and glasnost gives us hope, although we remember that old American political adage: 'Trust everybody – but cut cards.'

"Today we can say with caution that we may be entering a new era of U.S. and Soviet relations. It's been a long time coming, but unlike past improvements that saw only a brief day, I think this one will have a broad and stable footing. If the Soviets want it to grow, it can and it will."

(From an address to provincial newspaper, radio and TV programme editors)

Factors of security

We have got too used to the idea that security is assured by military might. And we have been relegating its political, economic, humanitarian – in a word, non-military – aspects to the background for too long.

In fact, security is indivisible. This is the gist of the concept of an all-embracing international security system put forward by the Soviet Union.

At the Third Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly on Disarmament, Eduard Shevardnadze pointed out that "the answer to the problem of establishing such a system lies in new notions of how reasonably to combine and harmonize the interests of national and universal security. These notions are based on the idea of a changeover to non-military guarantees..."

Numerous countries interact on the world arena, each pursuing its own national interests. Previously, these interests were counterpoised by the mechanism of the "balance of forces" (armed forces, above all). In fact, that amounted to the observance of the interests solely of the few great powers. If the mechanism failed, war would break out.

Times have changed: in a situation where all countries worldwide are interdependent, the egoistic pursuance by the strongest of their own interests has begun to boomerang, especially in cases where they try to use force. It was hardly accidental that the New York Stock Exchange crash of October 19, 1987, followed the U.S. Navy's missile attack on the Iranian oil platforms in the Persian Gulf.

Weapons have changed too: in this nuclear-missile age of ours, no state can guarantee its security by military means alone.

What are we trying to secure ourselves against today? Against war, or against aggression? What happened in June 1941 is within our people's living memory. The Americans are haunted by the spectre of Pearl Harbor. Other nations also preserve the memories of their historical traumas. Hence the improtance of the measures proposed by our country to detract from the danger of a surprise attack, and gear military structures to non-offensive defence purposes.

Changes are needed not only in military structures, but also in our ideas of each other. It's time each side started to regard the other as a potential (as yet) partner rather than as a potential enemy. Mutual mistrust, the arms race, the likely escalation of regional conflicts and so on, are fraught with the danger of a holocaust. It is therefore necessary in particular to improve the entire system of international relations. The United Nations has enormous – and still untapped – potential in this respect. The Third Special Session defined its mission as the shaping of an integral disarmament concept for a world made up of interdependent entities.

We are far, of course, from treating the military aspect of security as something of secondary importance. However, if regarded from the purely military-technical angle (as the East-West problem still largely is), the picture of the world may lose its perspective. Why, for example, does nobody think the United Kingdom a threat to American national security? Is it because the political, economic, historical and cultural links between the two countries exclude the danger of a war between them? Now, as far as the East-West relations are concerned, any military-technical potential is automatically regarded as a threat. The most pessimistic view is taken of any situation.

Genuine international security should be based on a complex system of interrelationships bringing various states and societies together. There is still no infrastructure of strong East-West political, economic, humanitarian ties guaranteeing security as the absence of the very threat of war.

It is hard, of course, for traditional political thinking to accept the fact that interdependence can be the basis of security for each individual country, as well as internationally. In the current political lexicon "dependence" (even "mutual") is almost synonymous with "weakness"; hence the idea that each country should look after its security on its own.

But is any country really capable of guaranteeing its security unilaterally, so to say? Not now, as we have recently come to realize in the military sphere. Political dictat is of no use, either; only dialogue, and quests for compromise (which, in this context, means dependence on the opponent) can lead to greater mutual security. The record of recent Soviet-American negotiations – the signing of the INF treaty above all – bears this out.

The strength and meaning of interdependence are particularly manifest in the economic sphere today. You cannot of course speak of security in the case of a backward debtor country with a monocrop economy. But the more active a country is in the intricate and ramified system of worldwide economic relations, the greater its security. The still not uncommon identification of economic security with "self-sufficiency" or autarchy is out of keeping with the present-day realities. It will be remembered that most of our own economic ills have been caused by our isolation from the world economy as a system. Has this added in any way to our security?

Despite the enormous moral potential built up by human civilization, the idea of the world as an integral whole meets with the greatest opposition of all in the humanitarian sphere, which largely remains a proving ground for confrontation. And this despite the fact that trust – an essential condition of security – can be established only between societies that at least understand, if not share, each other's values. Washington has done its utmost to use humanitarian problems as trump cards in its political game, but then a great deal has depended on us too. For decades, we have doggedly denied the existence in our society of problems visible to a naked eye.

Thanks to perestroika and glasnost, our society has won greater trust and understanding worldwide, and this has benefitted our security.

In our political action for disarmament we take the lessons of the past – the past mistakes – into account. The new political thinking is coming to replace the old. This is a factor in strengthening universal security as well as our own.

Igor Malashenko

Convictions on trial

The trial of Haydar Kutlu, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Turkey, Nihat Sargin, General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Turkey, and their associates opened in Ankara on June 8. Before proceeding to the trial let us make an excursus into the recent past.

October 7, 1987. Behice Boran, general chairman of the Workers' Party of Turkey, and Haydar Kutlu, general secretary of the Communist Party of Turkey, announced at a press conference in Brussels that after eight years of talks the two parties had decided to form a United Communist Party of Turkey. In the jointly drafted programme, universal peace and the democratic renewal of the country are defined as the main strategic goals of a united party. Two days later Behice Boran died at the age of 77, and with the permission of Turkish authorities she was buried in Istanbul.

October 27. The central committees of the Communist and Workers' parties announced that Haydar Kutlu and Nihat Sargin, the general secretaries of the two parties, had decided to return home from exile in order to organize legal United Communist Party activity and start a dialogue with other democratic political forces in the country.

In the recent period the Turkish authorities have repeatedly spoken of the democratization of political life, alleging that the country has returned to democratic government after some years of military rule since the September 1980 coup.

November 11. Nihat Sargin and Haydar Kutlu told a press conference in West Berlin about the aim of their return to Turkey – to join the struggle for the democratization of political life, the extension of human rights and freedoms, and the legalization of the communist movement there.

November 16. They flew home from Munich, accompanied by a group of West European parliamentarians, lawyers and journalists. Kutlu and Sargin had hardly taken a few steps on their arrival at Ankara airport when security agents separated them from the accompanying party. The two men were shoved into a police van, handcuffed, blindfolded and taken to the Ankara public security department.

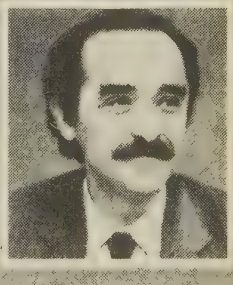
For 19 days Kutlu and Sargin were continuously interrogated. They had no contact with the outside world, and lawyers were not allowed to visit them. It became known later that they had been tortured by electric current and icy water under heavy pressure, beaten and injected with psychotropic preparations in order to break their will.

December 5. An official decree on the arrest of Kutlu and Sargin was published, and the two men were transferred to the Ankara central prison. Lawyers were allowed to visit them.

March 11, 1988. The prosecutor's office released a 231-page indictment accusing Kutlu and Sargin of communist activity and propaganda, leading "an illegal party whose goal is to establish in Turkey a regime based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism," contempt of the country's leaders, etc. Under these charges the two men face a long prison term.

June 8. A huge crowd had gathered in front of the public security court building in Ankara, where the trial opened. Dozens of foreign observers, local and foreign lawyers, journalists

Nihat Sargin was born in Istanbul in 1926. A physician by profession. In the 1940s he was active in the democratic movement. In 1950 he was arrested and imprisoned for campaigning against the dispatch of Turkish soldiers for participation in the U.S. aggression in Korea. In 1962 Sargin joined the Workers' Party and was elected general secretary in 1966. He was again arrested in 1971, when the Workers' Party had been banned, and was re-elected general secretary in 1975, when the party was re-established. Following a military coup in September 1980 and the banning of political activity, Sargin was compelled to emigrate to Western Europe.



Haydar Kutlu (real name Nabi Yagci) was born in the Tokat Vilayet in 1944. He studied law at Istanbul University and simultaneously took an active part in the student anti-imperialist movement. While a student, he joined the Workers' Party and was arrested for his activity. He failed to complete his university course. In 1974 Kutlu joined the illegal Communist Party of Turkey and for several years led the work of the underground party committee of the Istanbul Vilayet. In 1981 he was elected assistant general secretary and in 1983, general secretary of the Communist Party. In 1981 Haydar Kutlu emigrated to Western Europe.

They had hardly taken a few steps on arrival in Ankara...

and public activists were also present. A storm of applause broke out when the Communist leaders were brought to the court in police vans. Having raised his manacled hands, Haydar Kutlu cried out: "The struggle for democracy continues!"

There is no room for all those who want to attend the trial, as the small courtroom seats only 100. About 420 lawyers had volunteered to plead for the defendants. The public have been carefully selected. The frame-up is being turned into a semi-closed trial.

The "arguments" against the Communists and communism contained in the long indictment read out by the prosecutor shocked even the media and people who are far from having left-wing sympathies. Commenting on the stories that Communists "kill everyone who is not with them," all talented, energetic and enterprising people, and on other nonsense, the right-wing newspaper Hürriyet asked: why couldn't the prosecutor go farther and declare, for instance, that "Communists catch children at nights and then boil and eat them?"

The overtly political and legally unfounded character of the charges against Kutlu and Sargin has aroused public indignation and protest worldwide. About 100 members of the European Parliament have signed a declaration demanding their release, since they had been brought to trial for their ideas. Members of parliament and lawyers, representatives of various political parties and prominent cultural figures in many countries are protesting against the Ankara frame-up and declaring their support for the courageous Turkish democrats.

The CPSU Central Committee, which had already demanded the release of Kutlu and Sargin, recently sent them a telegram expressing its solidarity and the sympathies of the Soviet people.

We are following the Ankara trial with alarm. People sincerely concerned about the fate of Kutlu and Sargin are asking: "Why did they return home? Didn't they know they would be arrested?"

They certainly did, but they simply could not wait for the time when the Communist Party would be legalized in Turkey and they would be able to return quietly. To some extent, they drew fire upon themselves, because a hard struggle has to be waged for the rights and democratic freedoms of the working people.

The two leaders fully understood what awaited them in Turkey. Shortly before returning home, Kutlu said: "We do not cherish illusions that this step will bring easy success. But it is an act in the struggle in the name of our freedom." They also understood the price of this freedom. "If we want to walk freely in the streets, we have to learn to pace prison cells," Kutlu added.

To step up the fight for the democratization of public life in Turkey, Kutlu and Sargin made the courageous decision to return home. Indeed, the arrest and trial of the Communist leaders served as a catalyst of the idea of the need for radical democratic changes in the country. This idea is now winning increasing support.

The early release of Kutlu and Sargin and the legalization of Communist and other progressive activity in Turkey in keeping with the generally accepted standards of a modern civilized society also depends to a considerable extent on how vigorously Turkish and other democrats rise in defence of the imprisoned leaders and how firmly they demand "Freedom for Haydar Kutlu and Nihat Sargin!"

Bogdan Igrov

Mikis Theodorakis: I cannot keep silent

My dedication to human rights impels me to watch with great anxiety what my brothers and sisters in Turkey have experienced since September 12, 1980. For some time now the media have been reporting that the situation in that country is returning to normal. Premier Turgut Ozal has announced measures for democratization and his government recently ratified an important European convention on torture. Turkey would like to become a full-fledged member of the European Economic Community.

However, what has happened to two prominent political leaders – Haydar Kutlu and Nihat Sargin – who voluntarily returned home from exile last November to found a legal Communist Party as an essential element of democratic development does not tally with the professed aspirations for democratic change. They were arrested and tortured and are being held in custody. This is a violation of the international and European human rights conventions and even of Turkish laws.

It is impossible to imagine democracy without freedom of opinion and organization. As a co-founder of the Greece-Turkey Friendship Association, I perceive even more keenly what is now taking place in Turkey, a fraternal country lying at the crossroads of civilizations. I am deeply concerned about the fate of these political leaders, especially as I remember what we ourselves experienced not long ago during the rule of the colonels in Greece.

Those who cherish the cause of freedom for all in the world cannot remain silent in such a situation. These feelings have impelled me to speak out for the release of Haydar Kutlu and Nihat Sargin, for the observance of human rights in Turkey, and for freedom of opinion and political organization.

Paris

A second rendezvous with India

From our own correspondent
Sergei Irodov

There is perhaps no other country in which old traditions would coexist with modern trends so closely

After an absence of six and a half years, I am back in India as New Times correspondent. Heading for the New Times office from Indira Gandhi International Airport, I drove along a broad new highway. The new airport is beyond comparison with the old "Aerial Gateway" to the Indian capital which now seems shabby and unimpressive. What else that is new will I see in Delhi?

Pluses and minuses

Housing estates consisting of four- and five-storey buildings have sprung up in vacant lots. The buildings look well-kept and roomy. Skyscrapers housing hotels and offices have risen in central Delhi. A large stadium meeting all modern requirements was built for the 1982 Asian Games, along with the competitors' village that was named the Asian Village... Pedestrian underpasses cross the busiest traffic routes, and there are many more traffic lights, as a result of which there is more order on the city's streets.

Sergei Irodov was born in 1950 in the Moscow Region. He is a graduate of the Journalism Department of Moscow University. He has worked on the newspaper Trud and, from 1979, on New Times. In 1980-81 he was our own correspondent in India.

But other things also strike the eye. Slum areas have sprawled. They are made up of ramshackle adobe huts and other structures knocked together from whatever materials came in handy and are inadequately covered with thatch roofs or boards. Such slums are inhabited mostly by people who have moved in from other Indian districts. The Delhi authorities do not allow the construction of such settlements, which are called Jhuggis, but they still mushroom.

I was told at the Delhi municipal council that some 200,000 people from various areas move to the capital every year in search of jobs and a better life. Not many of them get work or find better conditions, but the complex problems of India's capital are exacerbated by their arrival. The Indian capital's population has increased by roughly 50 per cent over the past ten years to reach 8,000,000. There are considerable difficulties with water supplies in Delhi. The rivers and reservoirs providing water for the Indian capital have been exhausted by two years of drought and the heat of this summer, the fiercest for a decade. There are long queues for water at hydrants from early in the morning. People from the Jhuggis fare worst of all as they are the last to get water.

There is a shortage of electricity. The capacity of the Delhi power grid has hardly increased in recent years, while the consumption of electricity has grown, so it cannot carry the load. That is why electricity is cut off from time to time. Almost every day, power is cut off in one district after another for an hour or an hour and a half, many of Delhi's 62,000 industrial enterprises of various size stand idle, and lights go out in shopping centres and homes. The population's growth has aggravated problems for urban transport. The capacity of buses is clearly not enough at rush hours.

Chief executive councillor of the capital Jag Parvesh Chandra holds that the construction of satellite towns within the shortest possible time offers a solution to the problem. He believes that six or seven such towns would absorb newcomers as well as part of Delhi's present population.

All this certainly considerably complicates the daily lives of people in the Indian capital, though it at least does not jeopardize their lives unlike terrorism, which has become a particularly acute problem of late.

I have never seen such strict security measures in Delhi before. There are police patrols at most street crossings. Sandbags give cover from beyond which members of the security forces target the area with submachine guns and carbines. By the evening the number of patrols increases, the streets are blocked with metal barriers and automobiles and buses ride slowly one by one through the narrow passage between them, as policemen scrutinize the passengers.

At the entrance to the popular shopping centre Palika Bazaar, with its countless rows of underground booths a guard searches customers with a metal detector. In another popular supermarket, Modern Bazaar, an employee prevents customers from entering the premises unless they deposit their cases and bags at the entrance.

"We care for your own security, Sir, and for our security, too," he says with an apologetic smile.

Airports, bus and railway terminals and government offices are the most heavily guarded. But even these stringent security measures are far from always effective. Since Indira Gandhi was killed on October 31, 1984, there have been at least nine acts of terrorism by Sikh extremists in Delhi. And quite recently, after my arrival, there was a strong explosion at Connaught Place, in central Delhi, in the building housing the Citibank office. It took a toll of two lives, and 15 clerks and customers were wounded.

From Operation Blue Star to Black Thunder

At the trial following Indira Gandhi's assassination, the only survivor of those directly involved in the crime, Satwant Singh, asserted that he had emptied his submachine gun at the Prime Minister out of protest against Operation Blue Star.

The Lakshmi-Narayana temple is one of Delhi's places of interest.

The lot of peasant women is still hard.

That operation was carried out by Indian troops in June 1984 to suppress the resistance of Sikh terrorists operating underground. By storming the principal holy place of the Sikhs, the Golden Temple in Amritsar, troops drove out the extremists pressing for the secession of Punjab from India and the creation of an independent Republic of Khalistan.

On May 18, 1988, units of special troops and police successfully concluded an operation with a similar objective. It was codenamed Black Thunder. The period between the two operations had seen persistent attempts by the Indian leadership to settle the problem of Punjab by political means. At first it was sought to settle it by achieving agreement with the moderate section of the Sikh community: an agreement with the Sikh Akali Dal party, then ruling in Punjab, was signed in June 1985. In order to achieve peace and calm in Punjab, Rajiv Gandhi's government, under that agreement, made concessions to the Sikhs, proposing broader autonomy to Punjab and the transfer to it of the city of Chandigarh, now simultaneously the capital of two contiguous states, Punjab and Hariana, and the settlement of the question of the distribution of water resources between the two neighbouring states. But the implementation of that agreement has effectively been disrupted by outright sabotage on the part of the extremist section of the Sikh community.

Much effort was later exerted to achieve understanding with Sikh religious leaders. They proved, however, unable to bring the extremists to their senses. What is more, they became a ready tool for terrorists, who had again seized the Golden Temple and were directing the clandestine extremist organizations from it and planning numerous acts of terrorism.

"The developments in Punjab are occasioning increasing concern to the Indian government and the entire Indian people," I was told by Gulam Nabi Azad, general secretary of the All-India Committee of the ruling party Indian National Congress (I). "It would have been much easier for us to resolve this problem, had it been confined to a domestic context. I am sure that an end would have long been put to terrorism, had it been so. But regrettably, there are influential external forces which are giving the Sikh extremists powerful support. These are above all Pakistan and its overseas allies. They give considerable military and economic aid to the Zia ul-Haq regime and actually encourage its anti-Indian activity. We have information that there are 22 camps in Pakistan where Sikh and Pakistani cutthroats are trained to stage acts of subversion and terrorism in India. Up-to-date arms for extremists stream in from Pakistan to Punjab..."

So it is small wonder that the scale of extremist terror has become so vast. Dozens of people have been killed by extremists almost every day in recent months. The Golden Temple has again been turned into the centre of terrorist activity.

It was then that the Black Thunder roared. As distinct from Operation Blue Star, the new operation has not resulted in large casualties on either side. Besieging the temple complex, units of the security service and police managed in ten days to drive out the extremists entrenched there and compel them to surrender. Soldiers, among them, incidentally, Sikhs, did not even enter the temple so as not to offend the religious feelings of the Sikh population.

A telling blow has also, unquestionably, been dealt to extremists in Punjab in the moral sense. The government's actions have been approved not only by all the country's main political parties, but also, which is particularly important, by representatives of the Sikh community. However, the backbone of the clandestine terrorist forces has not yet been broken. Nevertheless, politicians here hope that the Black Thunder operation is the beginning of an irreversible process of isolating and gradually neutralizing the Sikh extremists and restoring peace and tranquillity to Punjab, however difficult and painful this process may be.

Who stands to gain?

In what way can this aim, so important to the country's territorial integrity, be achieved quickly? It would seem that this is a problem that must be central to the country's political life, as are the cardinal problems discussed at the recent session of the All-India Congress Committee: ways of combating poverty and unemployment, wiping out illiteracy and ensuring the unity and cohesion of the people and its religious communities.

Alas, instead, fierce debates have now been raging in the country for over a year because of efforts by Rajiv Gandhi's political opponents who make it a point to establish whether there was financial abuse when a contract for the delivery of a large consignment of self-propelled howitzers to India was concluded with the Swedish company Bofors. The opposition is trying to prove that abuses occurred and under this pretext is pressing for the removal of the current government.

The Indian government now perhaps regrets that at the time, out of the best considerations, it decided against having mediators in the negotiations between India's Defence Ministry and Bofors. In all, the negotiations lasted about ten years. The Swedish firm refused the services of middlemen. the indications are that, without notifying the Indian government, it paid a large sum to three foreign firms as what Bofors terms a forfeit for annulling the contracts on mediation signed with them earlier. Some bodies of the Indian press picked up the rumours initially circulated by Radio Stockholm that during the conclusion of the contract with Bofors, a certain Indian mediator, allegedly representing the interests of the Indian government, had been given a very large commission or even a bribe. Since then there has been no end to the rumours and unfounded accusations.

The Indian parliament has been drawn into the uproar. Over four parliamentary sessions its deputies have been endlessly discussing the details of the conclusion of the Bofors contract.

The Indian government has striven from the outset to carry out an objective investigation of the affair. And Rajiv Gandhi has more than once proclaimed the government's determination to punish the culprits, whoever they might be.

Late in April a special parliamentary commission presented a detailed report on the matter of the howitzers. The 404-page report shows that the choice of the Swedish howitzer was determined by the objective need to equip the Indian army with up-to-date armaments and that for its tactical and technical properties the Swedish howitzer is superior to other foreign-made weapons of this kind. On the strength of vast evidence, the commission has arrived at the conclusion that not a single Indian citizen, government member or employee received funds paid out by Bofors as a forfeit. Bofors president Erik Penser, who had earlier refused publicly to get involved in the "howitzer affair," declared unambiguously in mid-May that his company had never bribed anyone and did not pay any commission when the contract with the Indian Ministry of Defence was concluded.

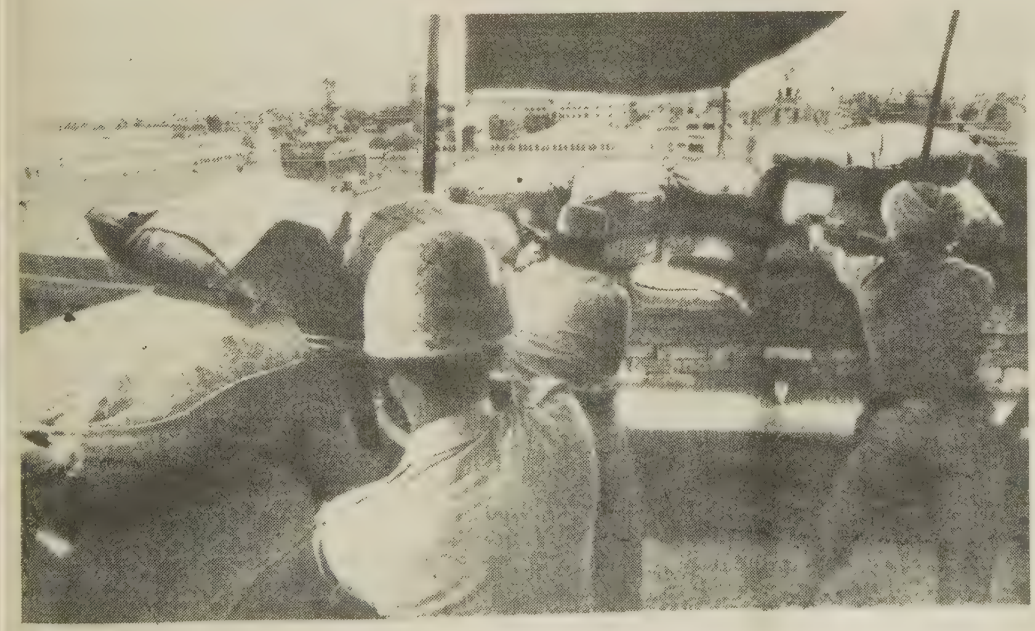
It would seem that clarity has been introduced, but the political adversaries of the ruling INC (I) continue their intrigues. Having seemingly realized the futility of their attempts to tarnish the reputation of the government and the Prime Minister personally by whipping up the Bofors scandal, they are now setting their sights on another "affair," this time connected with contracts with the West German firm Howaldtswerke for the delivery of submarines to India. The events so far are developing along familiar lines.

A great number of people in India believe that it is high time futile debates were stopped, for no evidence is produced and they are of advantage only to those who wish to damage the interests of the Indian state and the Indian people. Veteran parliamentarian Mr Bipin Pal Das summed up these attitudes in the following words: All this talk of bribes, kickbacks and scandals should come to an end somewhere. If there is concrete evidence, then it should certainly be raised, and the culprits should be punished. Let us not make it appear that we are a corrupt nation.

A resident of Delhi, Shabuk George, writes essentially the same thing in his letter to the editorial office of the Indian Express, the newspaper that is in the vanguard of the attacks on the government: "Let us not waste our valuable time discussing matters connected with the Bofors and HDW deals..., etc., but rather ask our elected representatives and opposition leaders to provide the basic requirements for our people: water, uninterrupted power supply, shelter... and above all, a safe place to live in." One cannot but agree with him.

DELHI

Photos by TASS and from the India Today magazine



The Golden Temple ringed by Indian soldiers in the Black Thunder operation.

Ten cells in a jail

Vladimir Iordansky

The ten cells are the ten South African bantustans, the "independent mini-states" ruled by ten "presidents" whose "independence" is opposed by the population of the bantustans and all South African blacks, for each is a barren waste with nothing but barracks for dwellings. This is the option Pretoria offers to the South African black population which is increasingly striving for a united, democratic country.

Under the policy of apartheid, that is, the separate existence of various ethnic and racial groups, South Africa has ten bantustans. Taking up about 13 per cent of the country's territory, in 1985 these ethnic reservations accounted for 52 per cent of South Africa's black population. The biggest bantustan, Kwazoulou, has a population of about 4 million; Transkei has slightly over 2.5 million, Lebowa about two million and Bophuthatswana about a million and a half. The other bantustans are much smaller. About 580 thousand live in Gazankulu, some 300 thousand in Qwaqwa, some 730 thousand in Ciskei, 225 thousand in Kwandebele, 376 thousand in Venda, and about 185 thousand in Kangwane.

Transkei was the first to get its "independence" in 1976. A year later Bophuthatswana followed suit, and in 1979, the same "privilege" was conferred on Venda. Ciskei was the last to become "independent" in 1981. Kwandebele was expected to become "independent" in 1987, but the move was postponed indefinitely.

Pretoria's plans were opposed in Kwandebele by an unlikely alliance between young radicals and members of the royal family. The alliance managed to gain active support from broad sections of the population. In August 1986, the legislature of the bantustan opposed "independence."

The government responded with brutality, and a wave of violence swept the area. More than 150 people died at the hands of the thugs of the paramilitary organization Imbokotho. Several schools were destroyed and an attempt was made to burn down the royal Kraal, the residence of the aging chief of the Ndebele people, David Mapock. Members of the royal family were expelled from the legislature, and some of them have more than once been arrested.

Independence is a sacred word throughout Africa. Thousands of patriots have consecrated it with their courage and self-sacrifice. Why is it then that, when the issue of the independence of the bantustans is raised, the word causes cynicism or anger?

The plight of blacks in South Africa is hard, but the plight of people in the bantustans is much harder. The racist regime prevents the normal development of the ethnic groups driven into the bantustans and deliberately cripples the social structures that emerge there, aware that a sick society will not be able to resist, let alone stage an uprising.

Partitions

The founding fathers of apartheid declared that individual ethnic groups should develop in isolation from each other. In keeping with that logic, each bantustan was thought of as a homeland for this or that ethnic group of indigenous Africans. Kwazoulou was turned into a reservation populated mainly by the Zulu, the Xhosa account for the majority of the population in Transkei and Ciskey, the northern Sotho make up the bulk of the population of Lebowa, while the southern Sotho live in Qwaqwa. The Swazi predominate in Kangwane and the Tswana in Bophuthatswana. Gazankulu is populated by the Tsonga, and the Venda and the Ndebele live in Venda and Kwandebele, respectively.

Can any ethnic group develop normally if the territory it populates is made up of 44 parcels of land separated from each other? That is what Kwazoulou is like. The Xhosa tribe is torn between Transkei and Ciskei, and Transkei, too, is partitioned. Bophuthatswana consists of six areas hundreds of kilometres apart. Only Ciskei and Venda have not been partitioned by the racist regime.

The partitioning of ethnic territories is an advantage from the point of view of policing them. If there is a risk of a dynamite depot blowing up, it would be a good idea to take the dynamite to several locations. The process of national consolidation is impeded if the ethnic group concerned is partitioned, and on top of that, the bantustans are not ethnically homogeneous.

While impeding the normal harmonious development of ethnic groups, the racist regime also aims to foment nationalist sentiments. Each ethnic group finds itself in the situation of an "abused majority" in its bantustan, with its interests being allegedly jeopardized by another ethnic group.

Tragic events took place in December 1985 and January 1986 in Umbumbulu near Durban. Unemployed members of the Pondo tribe, a branch of the Xhosa people, came here in large numbers from Port Elizabeth in Transkei. Rumours were very soon rampant among the Zulu that their jobs would be taken over, and bloody riots ensued between the Zulu and the Pondo. Over 60 people died in December and about 30 in January.

At the beginning of 1986 a tense situation emerged in the district of Moutse. Its 180 thousand residents, mostly Sotho, protested against their annexation to Kwanebele, where they would find themselves in a minority among the Nguni-speaking Ndebele. At least 17 people died in clashes there.

Such tragedies leave wounds that won't heal in the soul of a people. Inter-ethnic relations are poisoned by mutual prejudice and as a result the main enemy – the racist regime – is forgotten.

The social aspects of the ethnic policy of the regime in Pretoria are no less important. In 1985, the London Financial Times carried a table demonstrating what percentage of the population of the bantustans is accounted for by its economically active part. In Bophuthatswana,

where the situation is the best in this respect, the economically active accounted for a mere 25 per cent, as compared with 10 per cent in Gazankulu, 11 per cent in Qwaqwa, 12 per cent in Kwandebele, 13 per cent in Lebowa, 18 per cent in Kwazoulou, 20 per cent in Ciskei and 24 per cent in Transkei.

This means that strong and healthy men earn their livelihood outside bantustans, which are populated largely by old people, women and children. Can an ethnic group whose most active part has been amputated be a viable one?

Despair

The policy of the racist authorities is essentially aimed at preventing the emergence of ethnic entities that might challenge their rule. The bantustans are an appendage to the "white" economy, supplying it with cheap labour that has no rights.

In recent years, the chief agency recruiting labour for South African mines, the Employment Bureau of Africa, has notably reduced recruitment from abroad. The bantustans are now the principal supplier of labour, and 60 per cent of mine workers come from them.

Significantly, racist legislation prohibits companies from hiring workers together with their families. The number of workers with families must not exceed three per cent.

A worker deprived of his family is aware that his stay in the "white" zone is limited and that sooner or later he will have to go home. The prospect of eventually having to leave is a frightening one, as it is practically impossible to find a job in a bantustan and the land, if the worker has some, is far too barren to enable his family even to subsist.

Here is one example. The town of Botshabelo appeared on the map when the South African regime bought up the land around the Onverwacht farm and resettled some 75 thousand Sotho there from a place called Thaba'Nchu, which had been incorporated into Bophuthatswana. The appearance of the new community coincided with the regime's drive to get rid of "surplus" labour on white famrs. It was thought that the fired farmhands would go back home, but they flocked to the new town instead.

In a very short time the population of Botshabelo was in excess of 500 thousand. The number of jobless is put at between 70 and 80 per cent. Taking advantage of the situation, entrepreneurs keep wages down to a seventh of what unskilled mine workers earn. In spite of the starvation wages, every morning hundreds of workers gather outside factory gates hoping for work.

A glimpse of bantustan life.

Photo from Newsweek (U.S.A.)

Trade unions are banned here. Only a handful of factories have canteens or provide paid sick leaves and holidays. Journalist Allister Sparks, who has visited the place, says with bitter irony that "Orientals, themselves classified as non-whites by South Africa's racial laws, are the main exploiters of this opportunity created by apartheid." Of the 43 factories in Botshabelo, 17 are owned by Taiwanese, 4 by Israelis and 2 by those originally from Hong Kong.

The situation in Botshabelo is typical of other major working-class settlements in the bantustans as well. All of them appear near industrial centres or mines, in regions where the authorities are trying to avoid the concentration of blacks. Overpopulated and crowded with dirty slum dwellings, these shantytowns are a depressing sight, even if one is to judge them from photographs alone.

What is driving millions of people from villages into infernal poverty, overpopulated slums and merciless exploitation?

According to the findings of the Tomlinson commission set up by the racist authorities, the land in reservations can feed no more than 1.6 million people, whereas in 1984 the population in the areas concerned was between 12 and 13 million, with some 10 million peasant farmers and their families living on farms and in villages. Acute ecological problems and the exhausted soil of the crop fields are an inevitable result of overpopulation.

That is how one of the most sinister paradoxes of South Africa came about: the predominantly agrarian bantustans have to import food. Kwazoulou, for instance, is able to meet only 30 per cent of its own demand for grain, and the rest of it is imported from "white" farms.

The situation is made even more terrible by the fact that the system whereby people have to leave their homes to earn their living, as it has emerged in South Africa, destroys families and the communal traditions of the village.

Political pressure

In the circumstances, the indigenous African population, weakened by the drain of young workers to industrial centres, is experiencing internal strains. Its structures and relations between the chiefs and the people are changing dramatically, which gives rise to hitherto unknown contradictions.

In setting up the bantustans, the authorities took into account the surviving customs and the authority of local chiefs, but their approach was a lopsided one nevertheless. In the past, local African customs prevented autocratic rule, and the power of the supreme chief was re-

strained by councils of elders, although that procedure did not always succeed in preventing despotism. The racist regime has made every effort to remove any democratic control over the rulers of bantustans.

The racists as a rule try to prevent traditional chiefs from assuming positions of authority, but there are exceptions to that rule. They select stooges from the corrupt or ignorant and extend special favours to those inclined towards arbitrary practices. The "president" of Venda, Patrick Mphephu, can barely speak or write English and has no experience of government. He is no exception.

The first "presidents" of Transkei and Ciskei were elected for life and their rule is despotic. In Transkei, anyone can be sentenced to death on the strength of mere suspicion of conspiring against the "president."

In May 1987, three reporters from the Johannesburg Star were taken into police custody in Kwandebele. While in custody, they saw seven inmates beaten to pulp with sticks. During the night they heard the moans of people thrown into their cells after beatings during interrogation sessions.

The situation is much the same in the other bantustans. In Bophuthatswana, even one's shoes can be used as grounds for arrest. In January 1986, Lazarus Mandlazi, 18, went on a shopping expedition to Garankuwa near Pretoria. The trip turned into a nightmare. Here is what he said later:

"Six policemen stopped the taxi in which I was travelling and started asking me questions about the shoes I was wearing. They claimed that shoes of this kind are worn by members of the Congress of South African Students, and took me into custody. On the way to the police precinct, two of them beat me up with sticks. At the precinct I was put into a cell with many others and they threw in a can of tear gas."

The rulers of the bantustans have achieved notoriety for corruption. In Transkei, corruption has cost the treasury 22 million dollars, according to the findings of an army commission of inquiry. "President" Kaiser Matanzima and his brother George, the "prime minister," took huge bribes. The "prime minister" sold a licence for a casino to a South African company for two million rands, which he himself pocketed. That is just one example.

The anger of the people of Transkei could have led to an explosion at any moment, and Pretoria decided to take preemptive action. Martial law was introduced in the area following a series of "coups," and all political activity was banned. For the time being, Pretoria has no reason to worry about Transkei.

Monstrous spiral of feuds

Even in this atmosphere of terror, the anger of the people manifests itself. At the end of October 1987, elections to the legislature were held in Bophuthatswana. The election campaign went ahead amid continued threats to the opposition. Civil servants and teachers were ordered to register at the polling stations and the government said that if they failed to do so their wages would be withheld.

In spite of all that pressure, the elections ended in dismal failure. Only about 15 thousand people, or 0.6 per cent of the electorate, went to the polls. The government of the bantustan hastened to dismiss the results of the elections. It claimed a 60 per cent turnout, confident that no one would be able to challenge it. This was a mistake.

In the small hours on February 10, a group of army officers toppled the "president" of Bophuthatswana. The statement issued by the coup's leaders said the elections had been rigged and "president" Lucas Mangope and his associates were corrupt. The officers appointed the leader of the People's Progressive Party, Rocky Malebane-Metsing, head of state.

Pretoria responded instantly. South African troops rolled into the capital, Mmabatho, in armoured cars and a jubilant Mangope was returned to his palace. The rebels could not offer any meaningful resistance to the racist army.

The events in Bophuthatswana show how strong is the anger of the people driven into the bantustans which are actually prisons. The organizers of the coup were aware that theirs was a lost cause, but honour and conscience induced them to carry on. Their courage is a grim warning to the racist regime.

But are the residents of the bantustans really aware of who is their chief enemy? Are they not blinded by ethnic prejudices fanned by skilful propaganda?

Over the past two or three years, the bantustan of Kwazoulou has been the scene of bitter political struggles. The leading political part is claimed by the Inkatha party formed in 1975. Its leader, Gatsha Buthelezi, a member of the Zulu aristocracy, is Kwazoulou's chief minister. This has enabled him to strengthen his own position and the position of his party. Inkatha runs a network of armed groups and its own Youth Brigade. The United Workers Union of South Africa (UWUSA) was formed on ethnic grounds. Chief Mangosuthu Buthelizi and his party claim a political monopoly among the Zulu.

The political standing of Inkatha in Kwazoulou has been challenged by the United Democratic Front (UDF), which is working hard to unite all South African blacks, regardless of their ethnic origins, in a fight against apartheid. In the opinion of Anthony Robinson of the Financial Times, the UDF enjoys the greatest support among Zulu young people, who reject the old tribalist traditions and dependence on village chiefs and aspire to the ideal of a socialist non-racial society. Inkatha is, on the contrary, seeking support from the hierarchy of village elders and chiefs whose traditional life-styles are threatened by urban influences.

That internal conflict erupts in bloody clashes, which were especially brutal in the vicinity of Pietermaritzburg where Inkatha militants created an atmosphere of terror. The prominent public figures of the country have been calling for an end to the feuds. At the end of last year, Nobel Prize winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu condemned the monstrous spiral of interminable murders. Appeals of that kind have been responded to and prospects for normalizing the situation have emerged. In mid-February, however, the government banned the 17 largest public organizations opposed to apartheid. The UDF was among them and Inkatha has now a free hand.

The resistance of most blacks to the policy of bantustanization has not been broken. Many of them are aware that it would be a mistake to underestimate the danger of Pretoria's plans and are doing everything in their power to resist them.

■

The junior world

Authoress Natalia Romanova has written a small book for children that has been translated into many languages. Entitled "Whose tree stump is it?" it consists of no more than a hundred or so words. It is about a tree stump in the woods, which a bear, an earwig and finally a man who sits down on it, each sees as theirs.

Her answer amazed me. The tree stump, she says, belongs to the bear, the earwig and to man. Each is its owner.

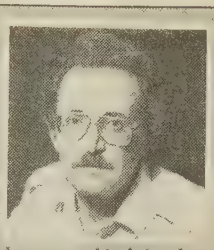
But what about the whole of this planet? Who owns it?

The world is ruled by men and women of 70, 60, 50 and 40 and 30 – only a few – years old. Alongside them, they have the world of future men and women, the world of the child, the teenager and the young person, in short, the **junior world.** One could, of course, compute its proportion – doesn't it comprise half the population in some countries? But when talking about human beings one feels it advisable to refrain from the present-day passion for translating everything into percentages. For no matter how old a human being is, a year, a day, even an hour, and what this human being would be percentage-wise, this world is his or hers in its entirety.

The world, as you know, is divided into continents and countries, and also by age groups and numerous other categories. Yet it belongs not only to the human race generally, but to each individual human being, in the same way as the tree stump is also owned by the earwig. This is not power for, after all, who rules the world? It is not posession either, after all, who posesses the world? Rather it is what I would qualify as a condition of the heart and mind, of the spirit. The fuller the human being's **sense of the planet** he lives on, the more profoundly will he accept the right that each of us enjoys to the whole of this planet, the more he or she will be a really decent human being.

The older generation usually calls the younger one the inheritors. Spatially the world is divided into states, temporally, into generations. Younger people are seen as the "rising generation," the "country's future," the "inhabitants of the 21st century." Even when a little boy engages in mischief at home, his mother is concerned more about what he will grow up to be. For many, children are not the earth's present inhabitants, but a crawling and walking future.

Yet long ago, at the close of the 18th century, Jean Jacques Rousseau discovered and declared that a child's life, a young man's life is valuable as such. That younger generation which we treat sometimes too severely, sometimes too condescendingly, sometimes carelessly, sometimes pragmatically, is a world that teams with life, that owns the earth today, that is its master today, striving today to arrange it as it thinks fit.



There is no need to introduce SIMON SOLOVEICHIK to the Soviet reader, particularly if he or she has children, because all who want their children to grow up into decent human beings have read what he has written and learned a lot from it.

On the other hand, we should add for the foreign reader that Soloveichik has now been engaged in his endless quest in the area of upbringing and education for almost thirty years. He always marches in step with the times, and even anticipates events by his innovative exploration of unpioneered paths. And as he has often had to stand defiant, even now and then expose himself to risk, his quest is not only one of inspiration, but also a display of courage and prowess.

Beginning with this issue, Simon Soloveichik will have his own column. In the following paragraphs he will tell you what he is going to talk about and why.

To be more exact, the life of the junior world is a blend of today and of tomorrow. That is its specific feature – it is wholly of today and wholly of tomorrow. The moment we lose sight of either of these two aspects, we encounter all sorts of unpleasantness from the small and the young. I shall not bother to list them; they are highlighted in news media around the world. When we concern ourselves but little with the future of the young, bad people grow up, people who are unhappy themselves and who make others unhappy. When we fail to see this world as being of the present, it rebels, conflicts, breaks with us, withdraws into itself or into groups of its peers, and we can no longer influence it.

The junior world is not the future but the present master of the earth, as much as we the older people are. To learn to live at peace with the young is a relatively novel need. It is a specific feature of the new era. In the middle of this century, sociological seismographs recorded a demographic explosion. This was followed by the educational boom. But, for some reason, all seem oblivious to the surging **third wave** of education and upbringing. Books on the subject are best sellers, in opinion polls the cares and concerns that relate to children claim priority, outstripping concerns associated with jobs and work.

I now find in my morning mail a note that tells me that a well-known Hungarian international affairs analyst, the editor-in-chief of a political weekly, has come to the Soviet Union to collect material about perestroika in Soviet schools. In the 19th century, education went hand in hand with literature. Nearly all the great Russian writers and critics were teachers. Leo Tolstoy opined that the years when he loved and taught children were his happiest. In this present, twentieth century, education is closing in on politics, inasmuch as the education and upbringing of children greatly depend on the present state of affairs in the world; on the other hand, concern for the life of our children increasingly conditions the political views and actions of many of us.

Last March the British weekly The Observer prominently frontpaged news of a revolutionary discovery by French pharmacists. Henceforth an abortion will be as easy as swallowing an aspirin. The new medicine against children has been tested in ten countries and will soon be available over the counter. The U.S. National Right to Life Committee has announced that it will boycott the firm that imports the RU 486 tablet. One cannot but term this a humane discovery. But will it not be inhuman – like many other discoveries? Will there not in that case be far fewer children – especially in countries where there are not enough children as it is? Will not the junior world shrink to a perilously small dimension?

We would prefer to dismiss these worries as pointless, but still, who knows. The earth as the home of the human race will be meaningful only for as long as it is the home of children.

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The Editors

What we expect from

Conference delegates speak at New Times round table

The Lvov Region

Yakov Pogrebnyak,
First Secretary of the Regional Party Committee:

We must learn from past mistakes

New Times. Our readers would be interested to know how the Motions were discussed at the plenary meeting of the CC CPSU. Were there any debates, of what kind? What are your personal impressions?

Yakov Pogrebnyak. Over the past years, the plenary meetings of the Central Committee have been exceedingly interesting. I had taken part in their work before and I am in a position to compare. In the old days these were relatively short meetings. As a rule they had prepared notes of a pompous and congratulatory nature. Now – and this was the third such plenum – there is no fixed list of speakers. Anyone who wishes can speak. At last we have people speaking sincerely and spontaneously. We have the courage to disagree.

N.T. This was the atmosphere during the discussion of the Motions for the conference. The nation expects the conference to give a second wind to perestroika, to borrow an expression from Mikhail Gorbachev.

This being so, it is necessary to be clear as to the political prerogatives. What will its decisions and resolutions be like? Just how concrete can they be? What do you foresee?

Y.P. I think the conference will pass several resolutions largely of an evaluating character. It must reaffirm the policy of democracy and glasnost and establish a course that will reinforce it. It will take another hard look at the economic reform and the cooperative movement and determine its position on many other problems which today are subjects of much wavering and controversy. This is an important thing to know because there are those who think we will make a sharp turn and some who feel that we will make a U-turn. When the conference has dotted all the i's, we will have the decision of the supreme organ of the Party, that is, a plan of action for Communists.

N.T. Isn't there a contradiction between dotting the i's and difference of opinions, socialist pluralism of opinions?

Y.P. I see no contradiction between unanimity on the question of the main road to be followed, the strategic goal, and pluralism as the principle without which this goal cannot be achieved. So the task of the conference is not just to produce a package of resolutions, decisions and the answers to all questions arising from perestroika. We need to create, as the Motions stress, a permanent mechanism for comparing views, for discussion as a norm of life, as the form of self-government. There is no alternative to that.

Look what the situation is in the economic field. Without denying some positive changes, I believe that the diagnosis set out in the Motions gives no grounds for complacency. The economic structure remains clumsy with its cost-intensive nature: whatever progress has been made is due to greater order and discipline. Production efficiency remains inadequate as the factors of raising it – including the latest in scientific and technological progress – are still not being made full use of.

The State Quality Inspection – a temporary stopgap measure is necessary; it has starkly revealed the low quality of goods (the average price of one kilogramme of machinery we supply to the world market is 2.5 times lower than the world price – this figure was cited by Academician Abel Aganbegyan).

The past year has seen many important documents adopted at government level and designed to promote reform. They include new regulations on the planning agencies, on the Ministry of Finance, on wholesale trade, new forms of banking. The Law on the State Enterprise has provided realistic prerequisites for a flexible and efficient functioning of work collectives under new conditions. And still, economic levers are not in full play yet. A whole complex of factors militate against them. The practice of state orders prevents enterprises from operating as well as they can. Quotas are often so high as to make it impossible for the enterprises to raise enough money for meeting work collectives' social needs. In some cases factories made larger profits in the old setup than after going over to new economic conditions. All this is bound to disappoint people and undermine the moral authority of perestroika.

N.T. If we follow your line of thought, we should now ask the "eternal" question, "who is to blame?" Without it, the diagnosis cannot be complete.

Y.P. The Motions for the Conference provide a clear and unambiguous answer to that: hidebound attitudes and the bureaucratic position of certain sectoral ministries and departments, which are paralyzing the restructuring of the economy, both in industry and agriculture. Resistance is making itself felt at all levels: at the top, in the middle and at grassroots. Take for instance, family contract. In my region the going is heavy. Sometimes people are afraid that the land will be taken away from them. It should be rented out for at least ten years, so that a person can really feel it is

the Conference?

his. Renting land for a year or two only encourages poor husbandry. However, many managers and experts fail to agree. Why? Because they are not used to being responsible for results, for crop yields. In a typical collective farm there are about 50 such "specialists." At industrial enterprises, in addition to the managerial staff, there is one engineer per every five workers, and one technician per every two workers. Besides, production forms and records are not updated, if they exist at all, and flow charts are not complied with anywhere. If you want to know the "opinion of the people," the so-called contract teams refuse to have such experts, and don't need their "consultations." To use sports jargon, they need "playing coaches." Meanwhile the "coaches" have not played for a long time, if indeed they ever played. The picture would be incomplete without mentioning tutelage from above. It is true that staffs at ministries are being cut and some departments are being abolished. But the bureaucrat is alive and well. The manager of a large enterprise spends 2.5 hours every day looking over "incoming" papers and instructions. Every day he reads 28-30 such instructions and resolutions, which comes to 25-30 pages. A poll conducted by the journal ECO among industrial managers has confirmed that the number of indices fixed from above is not decreasing (contrary to all instructions), and that there is as much petty tutelage on the part of higher government bodies as before.

What is the way out? Further staff reductions? Abolish sectoral structures? This many be a way out, but it is not the best way. One can have self-supporting amalgamations instead of the glavks (administrative bodies just below the Ministry). But I can assure you that bureaucrats will reappear in new places and in new capacities as heads of associations. There is already evidence to prove this.

N.T. What is the secret of the longevity and tenacity of the bureaucratic apparatus?

Y.P. It is strong for as long as it can preserve its administrative functions while remaining outside the actual productive process, for as long as it can control the worker without being responsble to the consumer. The philosophers and social scientists have their work cut out for them: they have to complete the portrait of the phenomenon. Here are a few observations: on the one hand, the bureaucrat shirks responsibility and avoids making decisions when others want something from him. But on the other, when he needs something, he produces a spate of papers and instructions. Another thing without which the bureaucracy cannot exist is secrecy and the withholding of information concerning its activity.

N.T. It is important, of course, to identify a negative phenomenon, and censure it publicly, to remove certain bureaucratic officials and even entire government departments. But how reliable is this method if the mechanism that enables this tribe to multiply remains intact? Do the Motions offer a solution to that problem?

Y.P. "We now know better what we want and how to reach it," said Mikhail Gorbachev in an interview for the newspaper Washington Post and to the magazine Newsweek. I think the "how" applies to all aspects of democratization in this country. This means glasnost from the bottom to the top and, most important, from the top to the bottom. It means the creation of a "permanent mechanism for comparing different views." It means the activation of all the intellectual potential of society. It means drastic reconstruction of the system of representative democracy – the Soviets. It means developing direct forms of democracy, creating channels through which public opinion can influence decision making, and not just be "studied" or "taken into account." Then bureaucracy and its apparatus will be conquered.

N.T. There is much talk of people's control in the broadest sense, the democratization of power. A lot is being said and written about it, especially now in the runup to the conference. But in actual fact anti-democratic trends persist. The danger that the reform will be drowned in words cannot be ruled out. Don't you feel that it is extremely important today to make certain abstract notions more concrete? For example, "the mechanism for comparing views"? What exactly does that mean? How is it supposed to operate? Or, to put it another way, what is necessary to make it work?

Y.P. I think the answers to these questions will emerge from the nationwide discussion of the Motions for the Conference. But what the Motions already contain is of no small importance. For instance, this is what the Motions say about the restructuring of the Soviets: "To establish that members of managerial bodies subordinate to the Soviet cannot simultaneously be deputies to the Soviet. By the same token the rights of the Soviet's deputies should be extended: it is not the executive committee that should control the deputies, but the other way round." This is a very categorical statement in the Motions and I believe it clearly expresses the viewpoint of the Party and the will of the people.

The deputies' commissions should be given greater independence. Deputies should meet more often. Perhaps they should be given leave of absence from their work for their period as deputies. The Soviets should be masters of their territory.

N.T. They should attend to administrative and economic matters which until recently were also tackled by the Party.

Y.P. Engrossed in economic matters, many Communists have forgotten that they are, above all, politicians, that politics is their main mission. The principle of a "strong social policy" formulated in the Motions should be implemented through the efforts of Party workers. Therefore, the Party should give more attention to questions of theory, philosophy, forecasting and, of course, analytical work, problems of relations between different nationalities. The Party has to be the guiding force of society.

Incidentally, all these questions were discussed at the Plenum in very concrete terms. One question under discussion was the need to abolish the sectoral departments of Party committees which duplicate the Soviets.

The question of Party personnel, of course, cropped up. The term of elective Party offices caused heated debates. The proposed restriction of a term to five years (with no more than two successive terms) is to my mind a very sound idea. Ten years is enough to accomplish a lot if a person tries hard and serves his people loyally. The majority at the Plenum spoke in favour of the restriction.

N.T. So, opinions did differ on that issue?

Y.P. Some expressed fear that after ten years in the Party apparatus, a Party official will be unable to resume his former job and find a place in life. I think the conference should look into this matter, too.

The main problems concern the democratization of Party life: more than one candidate, secret ballots, no promptings from above, the proposed socio-political

assessment of Communists, reduction of the Party apparatus, glasnost and openness in its work.

To conclude our conversation I would like to express the wish that the discussion of the Motions which is already under way nationwide should not fall into the old trap: it should not be confined to a restatement of points, "approval," and emotional appeals, lest any valuable idea or remark should be wasted. This will go a long way towards ensuring that the conference lives up to the great hopes the people pin on it.

Interviewer
Ekaterina Kozhukhova

GEORGIA

Gouram Gounava and Emzar Beridze,

first secretaries of district party committees

No to social apathy

A number of ministries have been abolished and the staffs of others are being considerably reduced in Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia. Some of those dismissed from ministries are being offered jobs in the Abasha and Lunchkhuti districts of the republic. This was the first news our reporter learned from Gounava and Beridze, the two first secretaries of the district party committees.

Gouram Gounava. We'll be glad to take on a livestock expert, a lawyer or an engineer with college education and practical experience of work and willing to fulfil it. But we do not want people who can only give orders and send in glowing reports to higher authorities.

Emzar Beridze. Quite right. There is, however, a serious problem here. Imagine a man who has worked all his life, sparing neither time nor effort, and been repeatedly cited for his good service. And when it seems he has gained considerable experience, the man is told that he is no longer wanted. For many people it is a tragedy. The economic reform abolishes not only the post of such a man but also his function – direction from above without any responsibility for the end result.

G.G. The mushrooming of administrative bodies will present a direct threat to perestroika. Plants are already operating or beginning to operate on a self-supporting and self-financing basis. How can one impose on them people they do not want?

E.B. Specialists with college education have to prove by their work that they are really wanted at a given plant or collective farm. Until recently a college graduate was provided with a job. True, more often than not he was paid very little. But it was a guaranteed income under any circumstances. In our district we have today cooperatives organized within collective farms. They decide themselves what specialist to invite and pay him by the hour. Therefore, only earnest workers are now invited. As you work, so you are paid.

G.G. It's good that a specialist has to prove he is qualified for his work and can be useful. But there is a danger here. The family contract has shown people what results can be achieved thanks to prudent management, emancipated initiative, and intensive labour. Many of them think they can do without agronomists or livestock experts because they have to pay them in cash. But having reaped the initial fruits, they will remember specialists, because further progress is impossible without them. I have in mind real specialists, of course. We should never forget about them. Many specialists have led contract work teams and feel no regrets about it. That is not bad in principle. But is it the best way of using specialists?

E.B. Perestroika quickly reveals people's merits and demerits. Numerous commissions were set up in the past to determine the fitness of employees for work. Their conclusions were not always indisputable, and complaints had to be examined afterwards. But who will examine the complaint against the decision of a cooperative not to employ one or other person?

It is characteristic that none of the specialists who found themselves redundant put forward their candidature for the post of chairman of a cooperative. They were not sure they would be elected because the people know their worth. Specialists of this kind prefer to complain to the district party committee, instead of proving their worth by their actions. But they do not get support there.

G.G. It is time to think in terms of realism. Can a man be considered a good livestock expert if the milk yields on his farm are low? To be sure, the expert will cite numerous objective reasons: an inferior breed of cattle, poor fodder, inefficient work by cattle-breeders. And this may be repeated from year to year. Why then to keep such a specialist? To exercise merely paper guidance and compile reports? To paraphrase an old saying: there was much talk and little food.

E.B. This also concerns us party workers. We also spent much time on paper work and tried to send the best reports possible to higher authorities. Such was the style of leadership. Has everything changed now? Have people reformed or have new workers appeared? Some answer in the affirmative, thereby engaging in wishful thinking and bringing us to the conclusion: everything has changed, but the economy is marking time, and this means that a wrong reform has been started and what the people need is not democracy or glasnost, or independence, but the old time-tested system of administration by mere injunction. No one says that openly, but the idea is being gradually inculcated.

G.G. "That is not the path we should follow," "the sole motive is profit," "there is a smell of capitalism here," are some of the phrases used by the opponents of perestroika to discredit one or another social or economic phenomenon which is only beginning to pave its way. Instead of developing a new process to make it the path we should follow, they justify their inactivity or even opposition by describing it as alien to our society.

E.B. It is now widely understood that the contract in all its forms is a real way of improving the present state of affairs. But farmers are in no haste to go over to the contract system because they are not fully convinced of the earnestness of our intentions. They want to see how the first contract teams succeed. This distrust, arising from the experience of our peasantry, is intensified by the actions of officials unwilling to break with the harmful habit of ordering people about.

G.G. The farmers of our district are now harvesting vegetables grown under a family contract. The collective farms provided fertilizers, seeds and plastic material and helped to build light hothouses on marginal land. Some families are bringing in up to 25 tons of cucumbers. The cabbage yield is also good. The problem now is what to do with the vegetables. I know it's not the business of the first secretary of a district party committee to look for organizations that will buy the cabbage grown by family contract teams. But what could I do? The people believed us and worked conscientiously, and then it turns out that the vegetables grown by them

not needed. Why should they incur ses, both material and moral, because he inefficiency of bodies in charge of chases? By the way, I made arrange- nts for the selling of our cabbage in ingrad.

E.B. It is a matter of principle: what uld a district party committee and its der do or not do? Today a district party mmittee deals with questions of every and is responsible for everything. Let not delude ourselves. As long as the rict party leader is held responsible affairs in industry, agriculture, trans- t, trade and education, he simply has concern himself with them. Both we other organizations have got accus- ed to this. The district Soviet, trade ons and militia apply to the district ty committee on any pretext. The al reason given is to seek advice. But e often than not they want to enlist support of party bodies, to stay on the side by saying that they acted with knowledge of the district party com- ee.

G.G. We in Georgia have small districts , if one does not spare oneself, one reach any place in good time. This hardly be done in the Stavropol Reg- and Siberia, where districts are im- surably larger. It seems the time has e to revise the functions of district ty committees and party bodies in eral.

E.B. It is now being said that the district ty committees should concentrate on damental issues of prospective de- opment instead of providing day-to- guidance in industry and agriculture. ink that in the course of perestroika, eeping economic reform, they should ncern themselves both with develop- nt and guidance, but in a way different n before.

The district party committee should be advantageous partner for everyone o is really interested in changes. ople should come to it with their ideas.

G.G. Even now people come to the dis- t party committee only when they ed something or when we invite them. as not yet become customary for them visit us on their own initiative, to share ir ideas with us. There is evidently a chological barrier here, because a tner may not always be right and one uld argue with him, whereas people not see such a partner in the district ty committee. That is why I seldom in- e people to the district committee and en come to them myself. In this case u can have a heart-to-heart talk.

E.B. In other words, changes should be ried out first of all in the district com- tees. The party must begin peres- ika in its own ranks. People need time accept that now, when plants are erating on a self-supporting basis, thods of administration by injunction ve been discarded and profound

What we expect from the Conference?

Conference delegates speak at New Times round table

democratic reforms are being carried out, it is worth going to the district committee where they can freely argue with officials. I would even say more: if the executive committees of Soviets or other bodies learn earlier to talk with people as equal partners, they will go there more readily.

Not long ago I met with Georgi Ugrekhelidze, an elderly peasant from Shukhuti village, who keeps 80 buffaloes. Until then we had doubted whether one man could take care of so many heads of cattle, and today we are discussing what should be done to help him keep 200 buffaloes.

G.G. We do not yet know what our people are capable of when all the fetters of old dogmas and the instructions based on them have been removed. In the economy, this has already been proved by people working under a family contract. No one should interfere with them, and not only in the economy. Soviets were born within the people's movement not on instructions from above. There is no need to hurry. The profound democratic changes involving all strata of the people in political endeavour are bound to engender something new in this sphere too.

E.B. There are no ideal people or entirely positive phenomena. That is elementary dialectics. That is why no form can be considered good for all occasions. Only the maximum variety of forms and opinions, and discussions of the substance, not minor issues, will bring us nearer the optimal result. We Communists should set an example for all to see: our unity is not like what you have in the army where orders are not discussed; it is shaped in the clash of diverse opinions and in the elaboration of a common decision. It is with such sentiments that we await the 19th Party conference.

G.G. A slowing down or a reversal of perestroika would be disastrous for the party and our society. That is why I am ready to fight hard for all three integral components of perestroika: economic reform, democratization and glasnost. Such is the mood of our district party organization.

E.B. The same mood prevails in our party organization. In the final analysis, the fate of perestroika depends on how many people it brings out of a state of social apathy, making of them politically active citizens aware of their responsibility for public affairs. It is the people who must carry out perestroika, and they have got down to it in earnest.

G.G. The individual must feel he is not only a means of attaining the goals of the renewal of society, but the main objective of this process. We must learn to respect the individual and ourselves. Surrounded with respect and protected by the law, the individual works better than before.

E.B. I think perestroika needs laws, clearly worded and concise, allowing for no diversity of interpretation, and binding on all. Unfortunately, we do not yet have such laws. Take, for instance, the law on state-owned enterprise. It is both wordy and ambiguous. What is worse, it is not being observed on the pretext that it came into force in the middle of the five-year-plan period, the targets of which cannot be revised. But why can't they be revised? For instance, is it worth turning out the planned amount of tractors instead of producing fewer but better ones?

G.G. In my opinion, the party conference must clearly state what trend in economic activity is more important today – the implementation of the five-year plan or of the economic reform. It is far from being an idle question for party bodies, because workers are asking the district party committee to explain whether the administration has a right to violate the principles of the economic reform on the pretext of the need to fulfil the five-year plan.

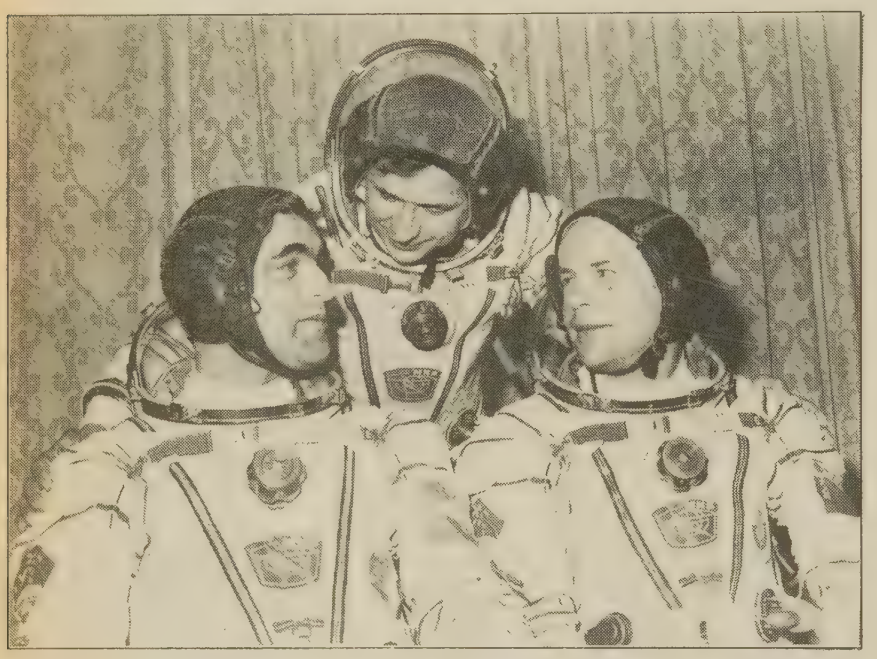
In general, it seems to me that we often lack clarity, and this sometimes enables the opponents of perestroika to interpret some decisions and laws as they see fit. The main thing is that this also complicates the struggle against them.

E.B. The people are expecting a great deal of the party conference. In particular, they hope that it will not resemble previous forums. The discussions held in the runup to the conference, with diverse opinions publicly expressed, make us hope that they will not be disappointed.

Interviewer
Alexander Guber

Abasha – Lanchkhuti

The first Soviet-Bulgarian space mission, carried out in 1979, met with a dramatic setback: Georgy Ivanov and Nikolai Rukavishnikov failed to link up with the orbital station, and barely made it back to earth in their faulty Soyuz-33.
And now, another Bulgarian-Soviet crew, comprising Alexander Alexandrov of Bulgaria and the Soviet spacemen Anatoly Solovyov and Victor Savinykh, lifted off on June 7, 1988. They are to carry out a much vaster and more complicated programme than that assigned to their predecessors; it involves staging more than 40 experiments and testing instruments developed by Bulgarian and Soviet scientists.



International crew before the lift-off: Alexander Alexandrov, Victor Savinykh and Anatoly Solovyov.

TASS photo

Orbits of international cooperation

By sending a Soviet-Bulgarian crew to the Mir orbital station, the Soviet Union has initiated another series of international space flights. Before this year is out, the Bulgarian cosmonaut will be succeeded in the orbital complex by two other foreign space explorers – an Afghan and a Frenchman. This will bring the number of international space missions carried out on board Soviet spacecraft to 15. To compare, the U.S. has given only seven foreign spacemen a "ride" on its Shuttles to date.

The Mir station has been orbiting the earth for over two years. it is the first in the series of our permanent orbital complexes.

The station is now manned by a new long-term team: cosmonauts Vladimir Titov and Musa Manarov. They have now been there for more than five months, and will host all three visiting expeditions.

Each of the coming expeditions had distinguishing features all its own. Bulgarian experts and their Soviet colleagues, for instance, have developed specially for the joint mission instruments for environmental studies with unique characteristics. This equipment is to undergo thorough testing. As for the Soviet-Afghan mission, it is a strictly practical project aimed at achieving an immediate – and substantial – economic effect. Photographs of Afghanistan, taken from space, are to be instrumental in solving many economic problems, and not just geological ones, either. Ascertaining the amount of water in the glaciers is essential for carrying out the arid land irrigation scheme. French experts regard the coming expedition as part of the preparations for implementing their programme Hermès connected with the development of a shuttle spaceship.

Soviet orbital stations – both the Salyuts and the Mir now in orbit – have helped Soviet cosmonautics gain considerable experience of extra-long space flights. This is all the more important in view of the fact that, as the recent Soviet-American summit has shown, a flight to Mars is no longer an abstraction but a perfectly realistic proposition.

Soviet experts have come up with several schemes for carrying out a manned mission to Mars by an international effort, with the two leading space powers – the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. – taking part, of course. The selection of a carrier for the Mars-bound ship is going to be a key technical aspect of the project. The Soviet Union has recently developed an all-purpose heavy rocket, the Energiya, capable of lifting a payload of over 100 tons to a near-earth orbit and sending a 30-ton vehicle to Mars. However, this is certainly not all it takes to make a manned mission to the planet a reality.

In any, even the most favourable, set of circumstances, a manned flight to Mars can hardly materialize before the start of the 21st century, although preparations for it have long been in progress on an ever broader international scale. Since the 1960s, the Soviet Union has sent eight automatic probes to Mars fitted out in the main with Soviet equipment. The next two probes (named Phobos) to be launched from Baikonur this July will carry equipment provided by 14 coun-

tries, and certain research organizations of the European Space Agency; moreover, NASA has offered to help pick up and process the incoming data by means of its ground radio telescopes.

True, cosmonautics does not live by Mars alone. Within the next few years the Soviet Union intends to carry out at least ten other outer space research projects with the cooperation of many foreign countries. The Astron automatic observatory was developed in the U.S.S.R. some years ago. it has already explored hundreds of far-off stars, galaxies and nebulae. The Astron is equipped with telescopes of Soviet and French makes. It was the first in a series of international projects of this kind. The world's largest gamma-telescope, the Gamma-1, to be orbited this year, is a joint effort of three countries – the U.S.S.R., France and Poland. It will be followed into space by the Granat observatory created by the U.S.S.R., Denmark and France.

Naturally, Soviet cosmonautics does not concentrate on fundamental research to the exclusion of applied studies. Ever newer vehicles are being added to the family of communication, meteorological and environmental-exploration satellites. Of late, the Soviet Union has been launching increasing numbers of technological satellites intended for making semiconducting materials, and medicinal and biological preparations in orbit. On the whole, applied and commercial space research is making dynamic progress. An Indian environmental satellite was launched from Baikonur in March 1988. Judging by comments coming in from India, the vehicle is doing fine.

The orbiting of foreign satellites by means of Soviet carrier rockets is just one of the commercial services the Soviet Union now renders its foreign partners. Many of our foreign clients apply for permission to install their research equipment on board Soviet satellites and orbital stations. The West German Kaiser Threde GmbH company, for instance, intends to do a number of research jobs at the end of the 1980s and in the arly 1990s using the Soviet automatic spacecraft Photon. The American Payload Systems company has signed a contract for carrying out technological experiments on board the Mir. Many Swiss, British, Italian and other companies are also showing interest in commercial cooperation with the U.S.S.R.

The possibility of secret technological information leaks still remains a serious obstacle to the development of commercial cooperation in space. This is largely a far-fetched issue created by the U.S. State Department; even some American newspapers admit that the idea is to keep the transport service market an exclusive domain of the American space industry.

Research cooperation in space has shown that if the participating states want to keep their technological secrets to themselves, they can easily do so using the so-called "black box" principle. This principle has long proved itself in international space research, so why not use it in commercial space projects? Incidentally, during the preparations for the Soyuz-Apollo joint space mission, there was also much talk about the possibility of secret information leaks but, as far as I know, none of the partners lost any secrets, while the mission is still deservedly regarded as a model of international cooperation.

The arsenal of space transport vehicles has been growing steadily, and this process is to continue. In the near future, the Soviet Union will add a shuttle-type spaceship to the range of its non-recoverable carrier rockets. Such a ship has already been given a metal body and flight-tested, though not in space. It will be sent on its first orbital mission unmanned, but future crews are already in intensive training. Controlling this ship is distinguished by many specific features. The pilot goes through a number of barriers totally unlike one another: zero gravity, g-loads, stratospheric effects, etc. So far the pilots of the future shuttle are gaining experience by simulating various phases of a space flight on board flying vehicles of various types.

Back on earth after a 12-day space mission in 1984, test pilot Igor Volk, for instance, immediately got behind the controls of a helicopter, and then flew a passenger airliner and a fighter plane. Altogether, Igor Volk had logged 5,000 flying hours by that time; his friends say he can get anything ariborne even if it is not designed to fly. The same is true of Vladimir Dzhanibekov, Leonid Popov and other pilots of the group now being trained to fly a shuttle. Upon returning from the Mir orbital station last December, Anatoly Levchenko, for instance, flew a TU-154 airliner to Moscow.

The Soviet shuttle differs from its American counterpart in many respects: it functions in harness with the Energiya rocket and can take on board various loads, their total weight running to tens of tons. I've been told at the U.S.S.R. Central Administration of Space Technology Development and Use for National Economy and Science that the ship can be used not only in the national Soviet programme, but in projects of international cooperation as well.

Mikhail Chernyshov

Economists in dialogue

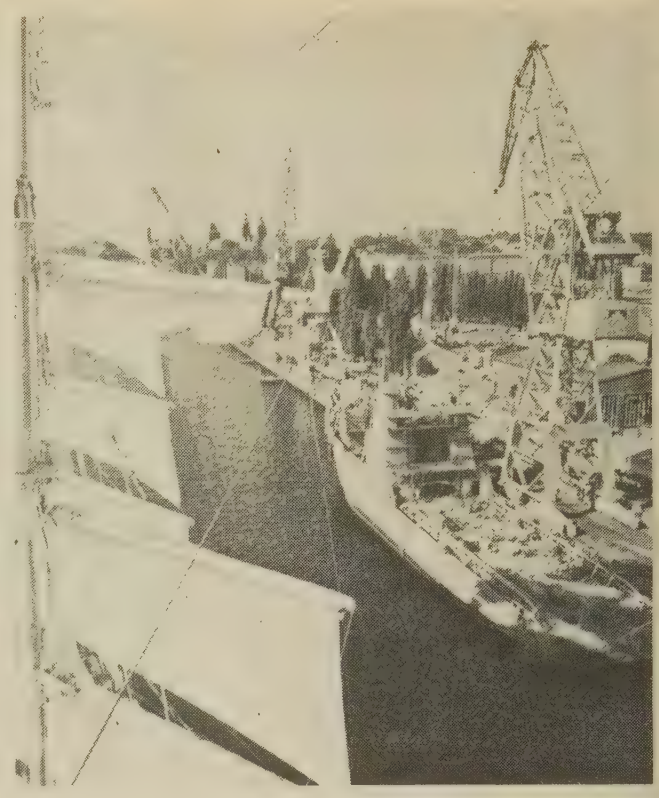
In itself, the fact of Soviet and Chinese economists and publishers of economics magazines having got together at the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences' Moscow Institute of Economics is hardly anything out of the ordinary. Such specialized Sino-Soviet meetings are becoming commonplace. It is noteworthy, however, that although economists in both countries are concerned with identical problems, on the whole, they often have a hard time understanding each other, even through an interpreter: over the more than two decades since the severance of Sino-Soviet relations, both languages have developed many new concepts, often largely similar in content but different in form, so that even an expert is sometimes at a loss for a prompt and accurate translation.

Now both sides are sincerely anxious to turn towards each other again. No one now recalls either the exalted friendship of the 1950s, or the mutual hostility and recriminations of the subsequent period. Exchanges of views have become deeper and calmer; each side is now prepared to listen as well as to talk, and to learn as well as to teach.

Alexander Granberg, corresponding member of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, editor of the popular Soviet magazine EKO, suggested that the mutual desire to promote cooperation be embodied in concrete action. The sides agreed, in particular, on exchanges of the most interesting publications between EKO and its Chinese opposite number.

A special provision has been made to the effect that New Times will be free to take part in this exchange if it so wishes. Our magazine suggested that a group of Chinese and Soviet economists and practical workers be polled on the results of their respective countries' Laws on the Enterprise in the first year after their enactment.

A ticket to Szczecin



From our special correspondent
Albert Pin

The distance from Warsaw to Szczecin is 520 kilometres. But the road from the Polish capital to the lands on the Odra and Nysa and to the Baltic has yet another dimension.

One of the oldest buildings in Szczecin is the huge square castle of the Baltic princes standing on a steep bank overlooking the Odra. The castle is over 600 years old. The West Pomorze princes owned the castle, the city and its environs until 1630, when Szczecin was seized by the Swedes. In 1720 it passed into Prussian hands: the Swedish queen Ulrika Eleonora ceded the city and the surrounding lands to King Friedrich Wilhelm I of Prussia for 2 million talers.

I took the tip from Stefan Janusiewicz, the charming doyen of the Szczecin journalistic guild, who was secretary of the provincial committee of the Polish United Workers' Party from December 1970 to 1975, and visited another place in Szczecin which is the regular tourist beat. It is situated a dozen miles outside the city near the village of Radziszewo. We climbed up a steep path to a huge boulder on a hill. In April 1945 this was the observation post of the commander of the 65th army, 2nd Byelorussian Front, Pavel Batov.

"Two Dniepers with Pripyat in the middle." The army commander remembers that this was how the soldiers referred to the Odra and its estuaries, which they had to cross on the approaches to Szczecin (then Stettin), which the nazis had turned into a stronghold. A high price was paid for the victory: more than 20,000 Soviet soldiers died in that battle. So, 315 years after its annexation, Szczecin was returned into its native fold.

The new authorities of Szczecin inherited a dire legacy, says Stefan Janusiewicz. The city had been badly damaged by American air raids in 1943-44. The sieze of Szczecin caused further destruction. As a result, half of Szczecin had been reduced to rubble and the historical core of the city was almost nonexistent. The port, the shipyard and the city's factories were in ruins. The streets were deserted. The population was barely 6,000 at the time. Now it is 400,000.

Stefan Janusiewicz moved to Szczecin in the early postwar years. Like other people who came to live in Polish Szczecin, he will never forget the time when everything had to be started from scratch. In the middle of May 1945, the first group of 5,000 settlers came here from central Poland. In the summer the city library was opened and the first tram rolled through the streets. In the autumn, the first issue of the Kurier Szczecinski came out. In the spring of 1946 the first steel-plant furnace went into operation. Two years later, the shipyard launched the Oliwa, the first ship built in people's Poland.

Of ships and people

Szczecin's postwar history has been chequered. It features many glorious pages. But the city, together with the whole nation, went through the events that impeded progress and even reversed it, that caused disappointment, bitterness, outrage and protest. It has gone through all this and reassessed many things.

Last spring, when there was a stoppage at the Gdansk shipyard, the Szczecin's shipbuilders did not declare solidarity with the strikers (as the organizers of the strike had expected). They showed a sense of realism and an awareness of the challenges facing the country. In those troubled days in May, I was in Szczecin where I visited the Adolf Warski shipyard and talked to its director-general Stanislaw Ozimek. I met the leaders of the provincial committee of the PUWP. Needless to say, the developments at the Gdansk shipyard and the Nowa Huta plant, which provides the Szczecin shipbuilders with metal, were a cause of great concern to the people I talked to: there are still enough trouble-makers in Szczecin. Some of them clearly hoped for a repeat of the summer of 1980. But this time events took a different turn. The city continued to live a normal life. The situation was quickly defused.

Stanislaw Ozimek became the manager of the Adolf Warski shipyard, named after a prominent leader of the Polish and international communist movement ten years ago. Previously he had worked for 25 years at the local Gryf ship repair facility. So he remembers the recent troubles of 1980-81 as well as the dramatic events

in December 1970 when an attempt to raise food prices triggered off strikes and disturbances in Szczecin and other Baltic cities in Poland.

I fist visited Szczecin in the summer of 1973. That year the Szczecin shipyard marked its 25th anniversary. By that time, shipbuilding was already a leading branch of the Polish economy, Poland being among the world's top ten exporters of ships; ships built in Poland flew the flags of 30 different countries. There was a steady market for the products of the Szczecin shipyard: relatively small ships (displacement of up to 35,000 tons), but sophisticated in design, highly specialized, and meeting the highest technical standards. Some of them were intended for oceanographic research in all climatic zones – from the Equator to the Arctic and the Antarctic. The first in that family of ships was the Professor Zubov built for the Soviet Union.

Incidentally, the first Polish vessel built for export was manufactured at the Szczecin shipyard to a Soviet order: it was the coal- and ore-carrying vessel The Chulym, launched in 1953. Twenty years later, in 1973, the hundredth ship was built for the U.S.S.R. In April this year, Stanislaw Ozimek told me, the shipyard built its 200th ship for the Soviet Union.

The shipyard stretches 12 kilometres along the Odra. It employs 8,300 workers, technicians, engineers and other specialists. It has its own design office, with a staff of 700, a technological office and a computer centre.

Under the current five-year plan, as before, half of the shipyard's exports will go to the Soviet Union. No wonder partnership with our country, which dates back to the early postwar years, is highly valued here. Massive Soviet orders gave the Polish shipbuilders a sense of security even when the world's shipbuilding industry was living through difficult times. The Soviet Union received many different kinds of vessel from the Szczecin shipyard, which were always delivered on schedule.

It would be logical to expect cooperation to grow in the future. I was therefore surprised to be told that only a few contracts to build ships for the U.S.S.R. have been signed. Apparently the question of prices, or rather, the system of monetary relations and the international mechanism for settlements between the socialist countries are the stumbling block. The malfunctioning of this mechanism makes some of our economic managers daltonic: they feel that it is more profitable to buy vessels and repair them in countries with hard convertible currencies. Meanwhile, Western firms are thinking of doing business with the same Polish shipyards.

A paradoxical situation. Let us hope that our economists will sort the matter out soon, assess currency rates and production costs and help the managers do their sums. Let us hope that they will take another hard look at the situation and avoid mistakes. The level of cooperation achieved can be lost much more easily than it can be restored.

The largest Baltic port

The port complex of Szczecin-Swinoujscie has been the largest on the Baltic since 1960. Last year it handled 28.5 million tons of cargo, almost double the amount handled in 1970. Every year at least 40,000 foreign seamen come here. Ferry lines have long been in operation between Swinoujscie, the sea gates of Szczecin, and between Gdansk and ports in Sweden, Denmark and Finland.

But the paradox, which we discussed with our Polish friends on board the Warsaw-Szczecin train, is that until now there has been no passenger service between the Baltic ports of Poland and the Soviet Union. A leader of Szczecin student tourist office with whom I shared the compartment found this particularly worrying. To go, say, to Riga, with which Szczecin has maintained friendly ties for almost a quarter of a century, you have to book railway tickets almost a year in advance – there is only one carriage in the train passing through Szczecin available for those wishing to go to Riga.

Meanwhile, the flow of tourists in both directions is increasing. More and more Polish and Soviet citizens want to visit each other. Can't an early solution be found to the problem? For example, a passenger shipping line could be established between Szczecin, Gdansk Riga, Tallinn and Leningrad, for which purpose a Soviet-Polish joint venture could be set up. The Szczecin shipyard could make its contribution to the venture.

In general, the people of Szczecin have considerable skills and expertise. No wonder they are worried that the city's unique geographical position and its potential are not being fully exploited to promote cooperation with, say, the Soviet Union, the G.D.R. and Czechoslovakia and expand trade and economic cooperation on a European scale. Szczecin has sea links with many countries in Europe and elsewhere. It is a convenient port for Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Austria. Linked by rail and road with the main European centres, Szczecin is at the intersection of important sea and land routes in Europe.

Several years ago it was proposed that the first duty-free zone in Szczecin-Swinoujscie port be set up in order to attract foreign investment and earn currency. The idea gained the active support of the so-called Polonian firms, mixed enterprises owned by Poland and foreign businessmen of Polish extraction. A national conference on the problem was held in March 1984, and sponsored by the Polish Chamber of Foreign Trade. But the project did not get off the ground at the time because the conditions were unfavourable: leading Western countries were continuing their economic blockade of Poland.

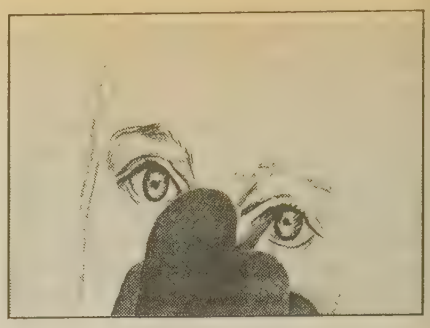
The authorities and the people of Szczecin did not, however, abandon the project. Recently foreign businessmen, especially Swedes, became interested in it. Under the updated version of the project, a duty-free zone will open in Szczecin and adjacent areas before this year is out. In the future it will become a special economic zone. The commercial activity at the mouth of the Odra characteristic of free trade zones will be augmented by services (storage and cargo processing) and industries in the port area. The entire enterprise will operate on a self-financing basis.

The initiative has the approval of the Ministry of Foreign Economic Cooperation and of the government. The appropriate bill is being drafted. The project is coming in for scrutiny in the local and national press.

If it materializes, Szczecin's role in the Baltic will grow. This will be to the benefit both of Poland and neighbouring countries, who want the Baltic Sea to unite and not separate their peoples.

SZCZECIN-MOSCOW

Arbat: Moscow's Montmartre



Art fairs, open-air exhibitions, new names and new trends. What have they opened up for the public?

The changes that have begun in the country have, finally, reached the arts, although the wave of perestroika reached painting later than it did the cinema, literature and the theatre. The reason for this delay is that the citadel of professional artists had in past decades led a very sequestered life.

The first breakthrough was the famous Bitsa, and then, slightly later the Arbat, where artists could meet the public directly without the artistic councils acting as intermediaries. Back in 1974 artists had made an attempt to come out on the streets with their canvasses and drawings. But the exhibition in Belyaevo was dispersed by bulldozers. Today Arbat and Bitsa (although transferred to Izmailovo) exist and cater to the requirements of the general public and large numbers of artists, both professional and amateur.

For many people, this marked the starting point of their interest in the arts. Once again people want to have paintings in their homes. What is important is that the arts should have returned in such a democratic fashion. The artistic standard of their work is not always very high (incidentally, for ethical reasons many excellent professional artists display their paintings in Bitsa). The Izmailovo open-air fair and the Arbat are the most democratic forms of artistic life, which is becoming fuller and more interesting.

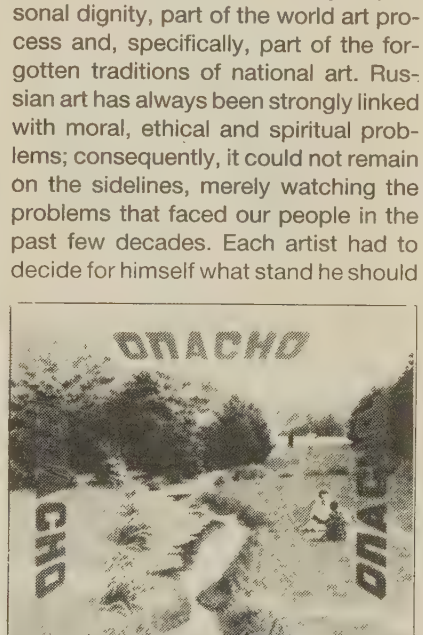
With the emergence of Bitsa and the Arbat, the policy of art gallery administrations has changed, as has the attitude towards selling our works of art abroad. The range of work exhibited and sold now includes the so-called abstractionists, whose work not only brings in foreign currency, but also boosts the prestige of Soviet art worldwide. It has turned out that we possess a wealth of canvasses and drawings which the biggest galleries and museums of the world are eager to acquire. At the beginning of July an international art auction is to be held in Moscow sponsored jointly with London's Sotheby, and it could well clean out our studios. It would be a good thing to keep at least part of this wealth for ourselves, especially now when the artists have premises where they can exhibit.

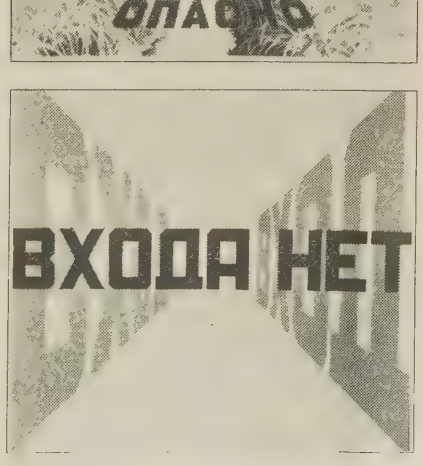
A few days ago an exhibition entitled The Labyrinth opened at the Youth Palace in Moscow. It was just nearly two years ago that the placid flow of artistic life was blasted sky-high by the 17th youth exhibition on Kuznetsky Most (in the autumn of 1986). It was then that we

learned of all the different trends and fashions that existed but which did not fit into the conventional framework of what art should depict. What until then had existed only in cellars and the studios was exhibited to a surprised public.

And the public, who for a long time had been carefully protected from any contact with their own cultural heritage (until recently the country's avant-garde had been entombed for decades in storage rooms and was inaccessible even to specialists), let alone the achievements of modern world art, found itself caught in an avalanche of new and unexpected information. But it turned out that, despite all the fears, the public was ready to cope with the uneasy task of revising the stereotypes that had developed over the decades. When asked by sociologists what they would do if given the right to remove canvasses from the exhibition, the overwhelming majority without hesitation gave the democratic answer: "Let them be shown, even if they are not to my taste or I don't understand them." It was the cultural workers who found it hardest to discard the stereotypes. It was they who gave the answers in the spirit of the autocratic-bureaucratic style which the survey revealed. Today the opening of The Labyrinth exhibition surprises no one. Its name reflects the many forms of artistic life and the works of various creative unions, the number of which is growing rapidly. But while theoreticians argue, recognizing the fact that critics do not even have words to describe the new forms of art that have suddenly materialized (which isn't surprising, since not only the general public, but the experts as well were for decades kept at a distance from the development of avant–garde in the country), the artists are working. The Labyrinth exhibition, like the exhibitions over the past season (special mention among which should be made of In Retrospect, Moscow Avant-Garde 1957-87 organized by the Hermitage), provides the opportunity to see a sufficiently broad panorama of modern Soviet avant-garde. And though this term is in itself arguable, we shall use it to denote the complex and original character of art that does not fit into the traditional canons of the past few decades.

The first thing that strikes the eye is the diversity of forms, the pluralism of style that characterizes modern art today. Side by side and on an equal footing you find abstract canvasses, minimalism, hyper-realism, neo-expressionism, primitivism and conceptualism. At the end of the 1950s, at the height of that memorable "thaw," Russian artists seeking self-expression in art came up against great difficulties in learning to master the whole arsenal of modern world art, for those whose childhood had coincided with the years of the personality cult had been completely isolated from world culture. They still remember how even looking through an album of impressionist artists could mean being expelled from art school. They were taught the dead language of the academicians and were supposed to use it to portray a utopian world divorced from the realities that surrounded them. Consequently, the struggle for the lost language of modern art was a struggle against the canons being imposed on them, a struggle to be an individual with a feeling of personal dignity, part of the world art process and, specifically, part of the forgotten traditions of national art. Russian art has always been strongly linked with moral, ethical and spiritual problems; consequently, it could not remain on the sidelines, merely watching the problems that faced our people in the past few decades. Each artist had to decide for himself what stand he should take: whether obediently to follow the directives pouring down from above, or try to figure out for himself what was happening around him and understand the hard situation the country had fallen into and the mechanisms that had led to such a state of affairs.





Eric Bulatov:
"Danger" and "No entrance"

In this search two principal trends could be identified: one associated with the so-called soc-art and Moscow conceptualism, and the other, the metaphysical.

Moscow conceptualism is a profoundly original trend associated chiefly with the names of Eric Bulatov and Ilya Kabakov. At the beginning of the 1970s they began investigating in their work the nature and mechanisms of the social myths in which we had been enveloped for so long. In order to break away from them, it was first necessary to recognize them as myths, as a diktat of clichés of language and thought. To that end it was essential to distance oneself from them. When in his painting "Quality Mark" Eric Bulatov sent that sign soaring into the boundless skies, it was both an expression of the metaphysical totality of the sign, and a deliverance from his own dependence on it. Instead of getting bogged down, the right is won to take a freer position, the stand of any individual pondering over the world situation and his own place in it.

When Ilya Kabakov paints a canvass stylizing the old postcards of the 1930s-50s, showing a trite view of Moscow University and, next to it, a shepherd with his flock, and on that superimposes a network of paper bows and flowers, colourful scraps of material, foil and similar decorations, and calls the painting "Holiday," one realizes that this mixture of bits of nonsense is a protest against the total regimentation of life, when even a holiday is imposed from above...

Soc-art and conceptualism played an improtant part in liberating the artistic and social consciousness and were a mighty factor influencing young artists. It is true that their social motives are portrayed more lightly and with gaiety. They grew up in a different situation. They are ironic. Irony and laughter have virtually taken our art over today. This is both a means of struggle and self-defence, the natural reaction to long years of the profanation of values and the persecution of anything living and new that failed to conform with the official deadness. Laughter, as you know, is a sign of health.

OLGA SVIBLOVA

Test for a sense of compassion

Can you teach mercy? Is the production-line method applicable to surgery? Is the opinion that a "fashionable doctor" will give better treatment always right? These and other questions by our correspondents were answered by Professor Mikhail Kuzin, a member of the Presidium of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Medical Sciences.

The interview took place when he had already decided to resign from his post of director of the Vishnevsky Institute of Surgery under the U.S.S.R. Academy of Medical Sciences so as to fully dedicate himself to research and teaching work he had been doing at the Burdenko Surgical Clinic of the First Moscow Medical Institute for a quarter of a century. Professor Kuzin is also co-chairman of the Soviet Committee of Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War.

New Times. There was much talk in previous years about the advantages of the Soviet public health system, its achievements, our country leading the world in the number of doctors and hospital beds, and the unique surgical operations performed here. At the same time we are, unfortunately, by no means among the world's leaders in life expectancy, and the situation is hardly any better as far as some chronic and occupational diseases are concerned. What is the main contradiction here, in your opinion?

Mikhail Kuzin. Indeed, the achievements of Soviet medicine, particularly in the field of surgery, are universally recognized. Nevertheless, we've failed to stay ahead in a number of fields – owing perhaps to serious faults in the last two links of the demand-supply-financing-realization chain. As for life expectancy, mortality rates and chronic and occupational diseases, these are only partially connected with the state of public health. They depend not so much on the quality of the public health service as on social factors, specifically on each individual's lifestyle: his regimen, diet, addiction to or abstension from smoking and drinking, as well as on the observance of safety

rules in production, on whether the economy is managed rationally, and the state of the air, the water and the soil. The health of a nation is directly dependent on its ecology.

Perestroika has pushed into the limelight problems that have accumulated in the public health system for years and are integrated in the socius life more than any other. Apart from attaching to them the significance they call for, correct ways must be found to tackle them. Let me explain what I mean.

We do have a large number of hospital beds, but people often have to wait for months for their turn to be operated on. Will the situation improve if we have twice or thrice times as many hospital beds as we do now? I don't think so, because hospitals make extremely inefficient use of their bed space.

Here is an example from the common practice of most hospitals: a widespread illness like varicosis calls as a rule for surgical treatment and a 20-day in-patient stay in hospital. We at the Institute of Surgery have suggested a way of reducing the period of varicosis patients' stay in hospital to four or five days! In an experiment which involved over 1,500 patients we gave varicosis cases out-patient examinations at our institute before their admission to a hospital, which was immediately followed by an operation and, within two or three days of that, by their discharge (unless there were complications, of course). The course ended with a 10- to 12-day period of follow-up checks for which a patient had to report to us or to his district clinic. Sceptics called this practice into question, but the results surpassed all our expectations: our patients' sick leaves were halved, and the incidence of post-operative complications fell drastically. Naturally, the state too benefits from this.

We have received many letters of gratitude, particularly from mothers of big families for whom it is not easy to be away from home for 20 days. Surprisingly, this method has left even our Moscow colleagues totally cold; no one has responded to our suggestion that at least one clinic should give the idea a "field test." I could give you many more cases in point, although it seems to have become clear to all by now that medicine, like the economy, has to develop in an intensive rather than extensive way...

Although we do have more doctors than any other country in the world, we are somehow always short of them. This is due, among other things, to the fact that too many medical experts who might otherwise have been practising physicians are employed in all sorts of laboratory investigations or administrative work which, as a rule, calls not for medical knowledge as such but for being conversant with the latest medical problems and a certain organizing ability. Our country's 92 medical educational establishments fail to meet the practical requirements of our public health system. As for institutes, faculties or even specialized secondary schools training hospital managerial personnel, our country has regrettably none as yet.

Another point I'd like to make is that seeking to train as many doctors as possible, we have markedly lowered the professional standards normally set for them. The emphasis on narrow specialization, lack of practical instruction in bedside care, and tight supervision of the newly qualified doctor's work have detracted greatly from the authority and prestige of the medical profession. It is no accident, therefore, that the problem of

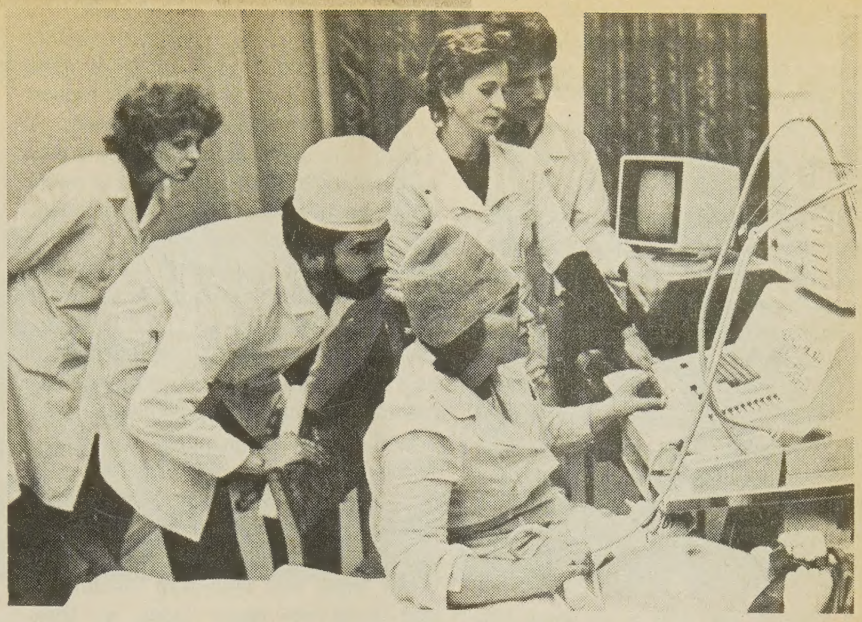
training general practitioners, the so-called "family doctors," has now come to the fore. I think we would be well advised to restore the undeservedly forgotten institution of general practice quite common in old Russia – but in an entirely new quality, of course.

N.T. This seems to confirm, in its own small way, that history often repeats itself. I recall Mikhail Bulgakov's story, "The Steel Throat," about a young doctor, fresh from college, doing a successful tracheotomy on a sick girl and saving her life. Is a typical budding doctor capable of performing such an operation today?

M.K. Diphtheria, which calls for such an operation, is no longer common, and a medical college graduate should not necessarily know how to perform one. Nevertheless, the situation is rather distressing: only a few of our college graduates are capable of performing even the simplest operations such as appendectomy. And mind you, the incidence of appendicitis is high today. This brings up, again, the question of whether narrow specialization is good or evil. To my mind, a young man who has completed a course in postgraduate clinical studies should be qualified in several specialities. As it is now, our district therapist is actually a dispatcher, his functions reduced to sending patients to specialists whom our polyclinics are always short of. A modern medical college graduate has vast theoretical knowledge, there is no denying that, but neither he nor society benefits from it. Theoretical knowledge is a far cry from practical skill. A family doctor is, in my opinion, supposed to be a harmonious combination of both.

N.T. A doctor can hardly confine himself to special theoretical knowledge and practical skill. He must be humane in the first place. You can't teach humanism, and knowledge is no substitute for it. How are those callous to the sufferings of others to be barred from the medical profession? Are medical college applicants to be tested for the sense of compassion?

M.K. We have repeatedly asked ourselves this question. Back in the sixties, when I was Rector of the First Moscow Medical Institute, we set up a laboratory to test applicants for entry and students for specific personality traits qualifying one to be a doctor. Years of observations and testing certainly helped us reveal definite tendencies, but we never succeeded in developing a technique of finding out whether a person is compassionate or not by nature. This is hardly possible at all.



The functional diagnosis laboratory of the All-Union Mother and Child Protection Centre under the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Public Health.

TASS photo

I think that the extent to which a doctor meets the demands made on him by his day-to-day work – readiness to help his patients, to make every physical and moral effort so as to bring them back to health – is the best test for compassion. This test works unfailingly: the weak, the cruel and the heartless drop out. And medicine is none the worse for that, rather the contrary! Nevertheless, we can and must inculcate compassion in our students. This is to become part and parcel of instruction. Much depends here on the teacher's (and, later, a senior colleague's) personal example. Students are likely to learn by example, and if it is bad, they will take it for granted and act accordingly. Compassion springs from contact with the patient and largely depends on the doctor's personality. Pirogov would remind his students that if a patient doesn't feel any better after a talk with his doctor, the doctor is useless.

N.T. This probably explains why, for want of compassion, people have been chasing prestigious doctors of late. If surgery is prescribed, a patient goes all out to be operated upon by a "first-rate specialist," pinning his hopes solely on the name of a well-known surgeon, cardiologist or ophthalmologist. Does this "prudence" always make sense? Is the gap between the average professional standard in, say, surgery and that of a "celebrity" really so striking? What would be your expert comment on that?

M.K. It is only too natural that a patient should want a guaranteed cure. This is why he insists on being treated – even for a hernia – by the "first-rate specialist." With very rare exceptions, such "overcautious" patients are merely egoistical – they distract a doctor from really grave cases and put him under nervous strain. Incidentally, more often than not people tend to settle for the services of a clinic or an institute enjoying a high reputation.

N.T. Could the problem of stepping up the public health service's efficiency and reducing the in-patient treatment period be solved by adopting, in general surgical practice, the so-called production-line method used by Professor Svyatoslav Fyodorov at his Moscow Ophthalmic Microsurgery Institute? True, this principle may further estrange the doctor from the patient and make the latter just an impersonal "object of treatment"...

M.K. Let me make it clear that "conveyer-belt" operations can be performed only on identical cases. Although he is not without his problems, Fyodorov has suceeded in "conveyerizing" eye surgery to a certain extent owing to the fact that the anatomical structure and position of the eye differ but little from patient to patient; consequently, crystalline lens defects can be corrected using strictly definite standard techniques. On the other hand, if you take appendectomy, for instance, the anatomical position of the appendix varies to a much greater extent, each case of appendicitis requiring an individual non-standard approach. And what about stomach troubles or cancer

of the rectum? You can't use any uniform surgical techniques in these cases at all, let alone the "production-line" method – not only from the technical viewpoint, but from that of humanity and compassion as well.

In any case, a surgeon must take an individual approach to each particular patient, take his physiological and psychological condition into account, select the most humane mode of operative intervention, and painstakingly provide against any relapses. All this can be achieved, in my opinion, not through "conveyerization," but through the continuous improvement of surgical instruments and methods, through a better organization of our work and, naturally, through a steady rise in our entire hospital personnel's skill. Our medical science and industry can play a no small role here.

N.T. You have actually mentioned the basic problems of Soviet medicine, surgery in particular, now being tackled in this country in earnest. Nevertheless, the situation still leaves much to be desired. As far as science is concerned, some physicians are of the opinion that the Medical Academy has ceased to be the headquarters of medical research. Is that so? Haven't the changes now under way in the public health system found their reflection in the activity of the Academy of Medical Sciences?

M.K. It is my conviction that the Academy has been, remains and will be the headquarters of our science. I consider it an indisputable fact that our public health system owes all its substantial achievements to the Academy, above all.

It was under the immediate guidance of the members of the Academy working in its Moscow, Siberian and Uzbek branches that recommendations were worked out for the treatment of a terrible disease like the virus hepatitis B. By virtue of its specific nature, the Academy has a limited contingent of patients to assess its research findings, so how can it possibly answer for the state of public health on a national scale? Besides, having no administrative powers, the Academy of Medical Sciences is in no position to have even the simplest and the most effective methods of diagnosing and treating this or that disease put into common clinical use.

As I have already pointed out to you, new, effective and easy-to-use methods of treatment are often ignored even in Moscow, to say nothing of the periphery, because adopting them involves changes, even though slight, in the habitual order of things... The reason why our health system, both in Moscow and in other parts of the country, is way below standard lies in its failure to make adequate use of the Academy's scientific and practical potential.

N.T. Still, one can hardly describe as normal a situation where the Academy of Medical Sciences of the U.S.S.R. works in isolation from the public health service as a whole. After all, you can't do fundamental research for its own sake...

M.K. I beg to disagree. We at the Academy realize our difficulties full well, of course, and are taking steps to cope with them. For instance, we propose to streamline our research network, close down small and inefficient institutions and establish larger ones in their place.

Other avenues of our activity include the intensification of research, the promotion of inter-institute cooperation, and the extended reproduction of test animals. I shall add to this that we are going to make a practice of inviting orders for specific research and experimental jobs from the Ministry of Public Health, the U.S.S.R. State Committee for Science and Technology and related departments, and placing them with our research institutions on a competitive basis. This will guarantee the high quality of our research efforts. Translating this idea into reality is a common objective of all public health workers, from rank-and-file doctors to the heads of large clinics or research centres.

N.T. The self-financing now being introduced in the public health services will be a good stimulus to overall structural reforms and local initiative, won't it? On the other hand, would it be expedient for the entire public health system to go self-financing?

M.K. If you mean the principle of social justice, it will be in no way violated in this case; rather on the contrary: the technological, research and personnel bases of free medical service will be further consolidated by extra state funding. As for the introduction of paying medical services, I believe this to be absolutely necessary in certain cases. The treatment of occupational diseases, for instance, should be paid for not by district polyclinics, but by industrial plants. Incidentally, this is stipulated in the Basic Guidelines on the Development of the Public Health System. This will make every factory manager weigh up what suits him better: introducing new equipment, improving safety engineering and making working conditions healthier, or showing no regard for his employees' requirements and health and regularly paying out large sums for medical treatment as a result.

Further, we can now offer patients special diets at their own expense. A network of cooperative in- and out-patient clinics will grow. However, it is not enough to introduce the mechanism of self-support; it should be continuously improved. For instance, hospitals can now afford to spend more on food for their patients, but they must get it only from definite supply centres whose choice of provisions is inadequate. Why can't a hospital arrange for a collective farm – or a nearby restaurant – to keep it supplied with food? Why can't a hospital purchase fruit and vegetables right at city markets?

N.T. The future is often unpredictable, but present-day trends may give us some insight into it. What do you think surgery will be like in the 21st century?

M.K. "We are no prophets...," a poet said. But one doesn't have to be a prophet to predict that if we go by the logic of science and facts the future of surgery lies in conservative treatment. This will be made possible by extensive prophylactic work, a healthier way of life, and healthier work conditions. The number of complicated operations will diminish sharply thanks to a more efficient early diagnosis system and timely disease prevention measures (surgical ones included) at the early stages of stomach, lung and mammary gland cancer, for instance. New methods of laboratory and instrumental diagnosis will become common to rule out mistakes in recognizing a disease and choosing the course of treating it. Universal prophylactic medical examination practice, which has already been initiated in our country and which I'd call a national public health care service, will go a long way towards making all this a reality. And I am confident that the 21st century surgeon will use the scalpel much less frequently than we do now.

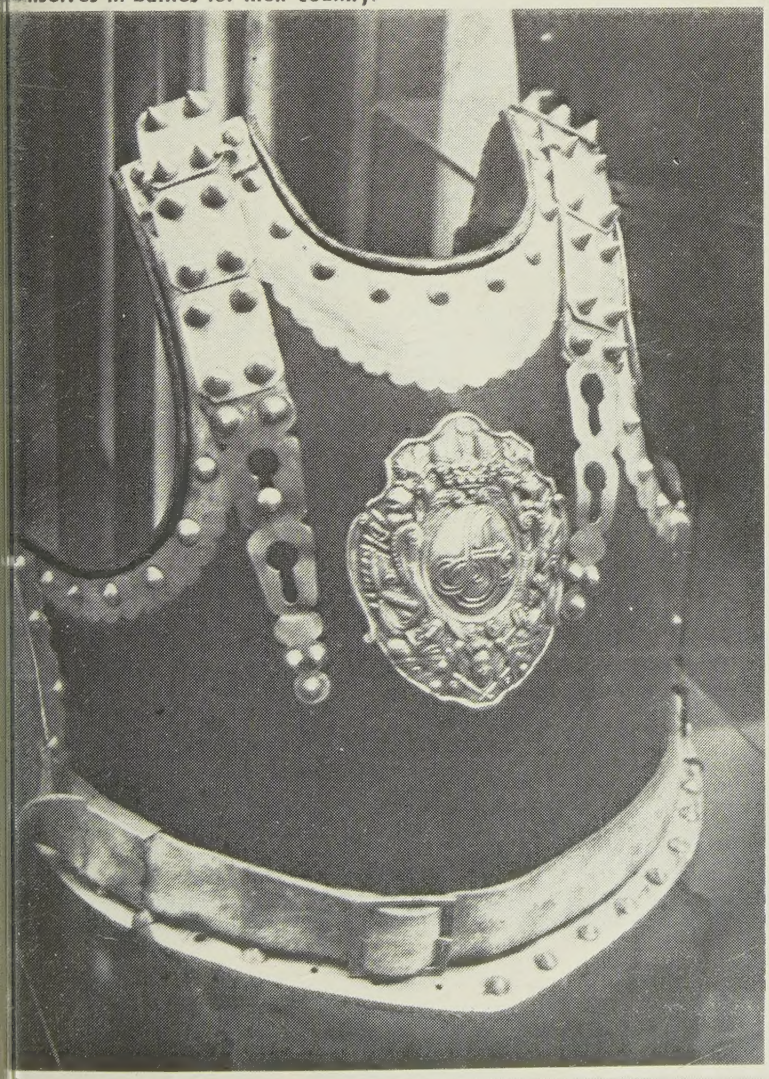
Interviewers:

Oleg Zhukov and Vladimir Kondratov

■

...ementoes of the Heroic Past

...queue in front of the Novodevichy Convent's St. Ambrose Church ...d the refectory chambers adjacent to it moves slowly, but does not ...et any shorter as more and more people wishing to get in join it. An ...position of Russian arms of the 13th-19th centuries from the State ...storical Museum opened there recently is unique. It features a ...ain-mail picked up on the field of Kulikovo, a sabre which belonged ... Napoleon, a rich collection of cold steel and decoration arms richly ...orned with precious stones. Also on display are orders and medals— ...mbols of courage and combat glory of those who distinguished ...emselves in battles for their country.



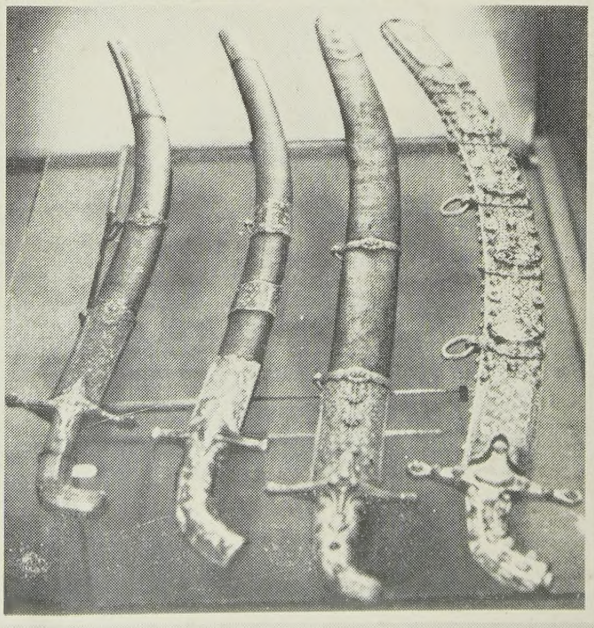
An array of decorations. Circa 1905

A suit of armour

A cuirass dating back to the reign of Empress Anne

Combat and decoration arms

Photos by V. Panov



Presented by the Novaya Zarya factory (U.S.S.R.)
and Roure Bertrand Dupont SA (France):

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(Scythian Gold) perfume

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